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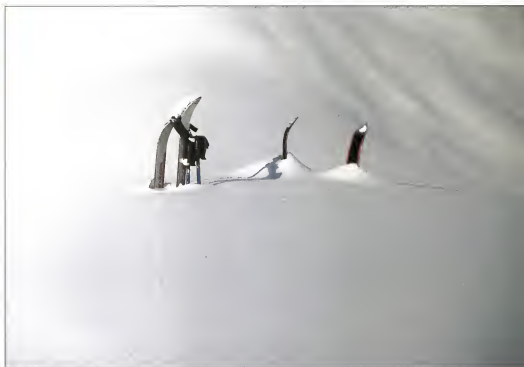
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-
- 28 **Tasmania's Big Walks** John and Monica Chapman select the island State's finest walks
-
- 34 **Staying Warm** Barry Holcombe discusses the science of keeping warm
-
- 37 **The Top End by Kayak** A remarkable Arnhem Land sea kayak odyssey, by John Boardman
-
- 41 **Take Me to the Pilot** A hot walk to this majestic peak in southern NSW, with Dave Jones
-
- 44 **Himalayan Ski Tour** Northern India is 'Telemark territory' without equal, says Glenn Tempest
-
- 52 **A Doddle on Mt Hicks** Things don't always go as planned in the New Zealand Alps... Will Steffen confesses
-
- 3 **Editorial** The Alpine Walking Road
-
- 5 **Contributors**
-
- 17 **Wild Information**
-
- 25 **Wild Ideas** Gearing Up
-
- 48 **Folio** The Flinders Ranges, by Simon Judge
-
- 57 **Track Notes** The Kokoda Trail
-
- 61 **Wild Gear Survey** Lightweight Tents
-
- 65 **Reviews**
-
- 77 **Equipment** Including Helmets Survey
-
- 85 **Wildfire** Letters to the Editor
-
- 96 **Wild Shot**
-

Cover A caver pauses beside delicate straw formations in Lynds Cave, Tasmania. Photo Stephen Bunton. **Contents** 'It's been another pitiful skiing season.' Photo Glenn Tempest. *Maximum recommended retail price only.

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Snowcamping, Kosciuszko

Photo Andrew Barnes

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The Alpine Walking Road

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• When is a walking track not a walking track? When it is the Alpine Walking Road!

At Easter last year my wife, some friends and I went walking in the Mt Jagungal area of Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. I referred to that delightful and invigorating experience in the Editorial of *Wild* no 21. This Easter I visited the alpine region in the north-east of my own State, Victoria. What a sordid contrast! Our walk started at Wrens Flat, at the junction of the two branches of the Jamieson River. Not so long ago a remote and unspoiled glade known only to an energetic few, this is now an ecological disaster area almost without rival in the Australian Alps. Despite hot competition for that accolade from such devastated bush 'beauty spots' as Sheepyard Flat, Cowombat Flat and Wonnangatta Station, all of which have been ruined, in less than three decades, with the advent of vehicle access, Wrens Flat is a conservation nadir.

Of significance to walkers in this State, in the 1930s and 1940s Wrens Flat was reached only by a two-day walk and was the base from which pioneers made early ascents of Mt Skene and Mt McDonald, including Cleve Cole's historic

Jamieson. Throw in a predictable litany of major earthworks, logging scars and detritus, a massive open rubbish pit (filled with vehicle-carried waste), jeep and trail-bike tracks, a bullet-riddled, vandalized and graffiti-covered hut, blackberries and other introduced weeds,



Laying claim to wilderness... high on Mt Skene, Victoria. Chris Baxter

and a liberal smattering of lavatory paper, and you have the picture. On our visit we were welcomed by a cacophony of throbbing engines, 'ghetto blasters' and crackling CB radios as under-age and unlicensed riders did 'wheelies' on unregistered trail bikes, and columns of four-wheel-drive vehicles repeatedly roared up and down the fragile river banks, presumably 'practising river crossing', within 100 metres of a new bridge. However, the Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands, which is responsible for administering the area, seems more interested in regulating and harassing a relative handful of walkers in the Grampians and climbers at Werribee Gorge and Mt Arapiles than in preventing the wholesale destruction of the Alps.

Evidence of logging extends much of the way up Handfords Spur, which climbs from Wrens Flat to Mt Skene. Not far above the logged areas we found signs placed by a mining company staking a claim, and at the summit we came to the major road that has been hewn between Jamieson and Licola. Quitting this, we swung

back north on the Alpine Walking 'Track'. Initially 'only' a four-wheel-drive road, it soon becomes a two-wheel-drive road complete with filthy roadside huts, Coke cans and, of course, logging scars. After the main road leaves the Divide the 'Alpine Walking Track' continues as a four-wheel-drive road to Mt Sunday and beyond. True to its predilection for public relations, the Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands has signposted every 'feature' into submission; no less than two signs on each peak tell you when you are on Mt McKinty and Mt Sunday! The marks of logging are in profusion along this section of the Alpine Walking Track.

The state of this track is in stark contrast to the Divide in alpine NSW and the ACT. If the Alpine Walking Track (and, indeed, the Alpine National Park) is to be a credible concept, roads



Chris on Mt Skene. Walters

in this region, including those for logging, should be closed, further road-making halted, and the area restored.

A walking track should be just that.

Reaction to the long-awaited index to issues 11-18 has been good. The index to *Wild* issues 1-10 should be available in November at the same price, \$3.95. Please refer to the subscription form in this issue. ■

Chris Baxter

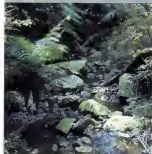
Chris Baxter
Managing Editor



'It must have all come in greenies' rucksacks.' (Wrens Flat, Victoria) Brian Walters

visit in the winter of 1935 to assess the skiing potential of Mt Skene. Today the confluence of two major logging roads, and a substantial new bridge, overwhelm the two branches of the

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Contributions, preferably well illustrated with slides, are welcome. *Guidelines for Contributors* are available on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. Submissions must be typewritten, double-spaced with wide margins, using only one side of the paper, and accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage for their return. Names and addresses should be written on manuscripts and photos as well. While every care is taken, we accept no responsibility for material submitted. Articles represent the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the publisher.

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responsible for erroneous, incomplete or misleading material. Audit Bureau of Circulations member. (The ABC records independently audited fully-paid sales of periodical publications. *Wild's* current ABC paid circulation figure is available from *Wild*.)

Contributors

John Boardman has canoed a number of Queensland and New South Wales rivers with his friends Kevin Mackay and Peter Pender, who accompanied him on the Arnhem Land voyage described in this issue. Prior to this trip his major sea kayak experience was a tour of the Whitsunday Islands with Kevin and Peter. The three men are in their early thirties.

Barry Holcombe is a Senior Research Scientist with the CSIRO Division of Textile Physics, and leader of a group of scientists studying the role of heat and moisture in the comfort and warmth of clothing.

Barry's personal interest in this subject stems from several years of walking in and around the European Alps and on the Yorkshire moors



during periods spent living and working in Switzerland and the United Kingdom. He has also spent six months in north and west Africa, the majority of this in the Sahara.

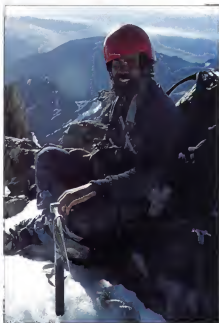
Simon Judge has been photographing landscapes since 1975, at first simply taking "snaps" while on holiday. Now, his holidays are planned photographic trips.

In 1982 David spent 26 days walking the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal, with 10 kilograms of photographic equipment. In October 1985 he spent two weeks in the Flinders Ranges, from Quorn to Arkaroola, photographing their rugged beauty and satisfying a long-held desire. His future plans are to photograph central Australia, Tibet, Morocco, the Sahara and Yemen.

David Mossop is a science student at Macquarie University, New South Wales, having survived six years at Sydney Grammar School. His interest in walking, climbing and cross country skiing developed into an obsession whilst a member of the school-based Endeavour Club. In the last four years he has been walking in Nepal, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, as well as throughout New South Wales. He is also a keen photographer.

Will Steffen first became interested in trekking in 1972. Since then he has made a number of trips to New Zealand for walking and mountaineering, an eight-week trip around the islands of the South Pacific, and a four-month trekking journey through South-east Asia and Nepal.

While at home in Australia he combines his interest in wilderness photography with bushwalking, skiing and climbing. In climbing



circles Will is known for his prehistoric nervous system; he once climbed and walked for three weeks on a broken ankle before the message from his foot arrived at his brain.

Will works for the CSIRO Division of Environmental Mechanics.

These notes describe writers and photographers whose first contribution to *Wild* appears in this issue. Brief notes at the conclusion of articles and features by contributors whose work has been previously published in *Wild* include reference to the issue in which it first appeared.

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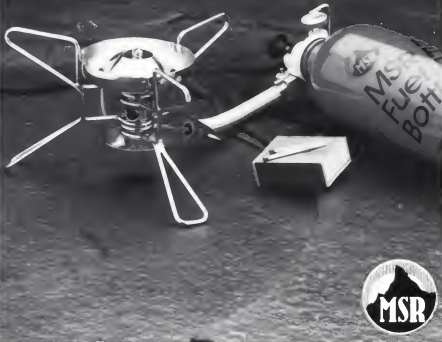
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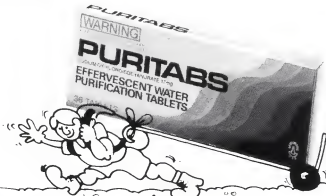
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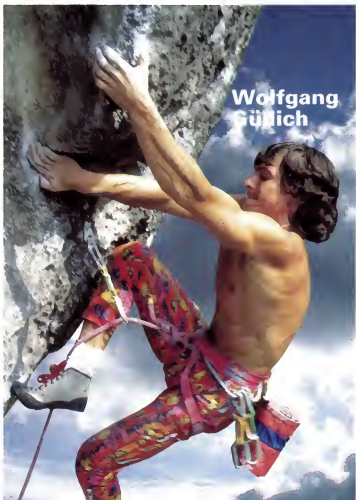
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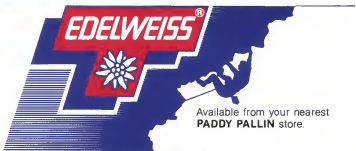


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A *Field Guide to the Grampians Flora*, Elliott 14, 74 (Rev)
A *Route to the North*, Cunneen 15, 34-7 (Art)
A *Singular Woman* 18, 7 (Info)
A *Wild Story*, Baxter 11, 3 (Edit)
 Abbott, Bev & Wayne Mullins, *Bushcraft, Mountain Safety Manual* 12, 13, 17 (Rev)
 Aboriginal heritage education kits 13, 7 (Info)
 Abelling, 'Kanangra Canyons', Noble 14, 64-71 (Tk Notes)
 Rockclimbing and abseiling 16, 63-5 (Act Surv)
 See also Rockclimbing
Access Guide to Natural Tasmania, Wilderness Society 15, 11 (Info)
 Accidents, see place and people names
 Activities Survey, Bushwalking 18, 61-3
 Canoeing and rafting 15, 65-7
 Rock climbing and abseiling 16, 63-5
 Skier, Graeme 17, 11-13 (Info)
 Assian Alpine Club 18, 16 (Info)
 Allen, Peter, Nilgiri North 12, 13-17 (Info)
 The Australian Alpine Climbing Club 12, 9 (Info)
 Altim, Ron 11, 14 (Info)
 Alpine Australia Calendar 1985 15, 71 (Rev)
 Alpine National Park (Vic) 15, 9 (Info)
 Alpine Rescue Techniques, Bogue 15, 15-16 (Info)

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Showdown

Wild Information

Federal Government locks horns with Queensland over rainforest

● **Rainforest.** The Federal Government announced in June that it planned to nominate Queensland's wet tropical rainforests for World Heritage listing. The World Heritage committee is expected to accept the nomination, which would give the Federal Government the power to prevent logging in the area despite the opposition of the Queensland Government. As there are only 650,000-750,000 hectares left, the fight to save the forest is a race against time.

In July the Rainforest Conservation Society of Queensland completed a biological survey of the Daintree rainforest which contradicts Queensland Government claims that the rainforest is adequately protected within National Parks. The society claims that eight out of ten of the most outstanding and vulnerable heritage sites in the Daintree rainforest are set aside for logging.

The Bolivian Government has agreed to set aside and protect 1.5 million hectares of rainforest in northern Bolivia in return for a reduction of its \$A5.6 billion foreign debt. Conservationists are hopeful that the arrangement, whereby an American bank is to buy the Bolivian debt at a discounted price and sell it to Conservation International, will be copied extensively.

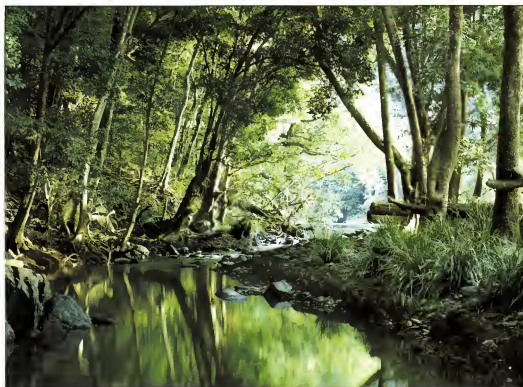
● **Sieg Heil.** In June it was announced in the Queensland Press that rockclimbers can be expelled by Rangers from Queensland's National Parks.

● **The Stinson.** Early commercial aircraft flew in what are now considered primitive conditions. They did not have the advantage of a radio navigation system, and many of the planes did not even carry radios. In those days a person on the ground could look up and know that an overhead plane was, for example, the mail flight from Brisbane.

When the Stinson flight (see *Wild* no 25) was reported overdue, there were reports from people in many areas that they had heard a plane flying overhead after the Stinson disappeared. The NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs decided to act on one of these reports and searched the Ku-ring-gai Chase area. Members of the Coast and Mountain Walkers club made a precursory search which was to be followed up the next week-end by the then recently formed Bushwalkers Search and Rescue Unit. By that time, however, Bernard O'Reilly had made his discovery, and the proposed search was cancelled.

W L Blayden

● **Greenpeace.** Lincoln Hall, Andy Henderson and Greg Mortimer, who were all appointed to the Order of Australia in 1984 after the first Australian ascent of Mt Everest, were arrested, and fined \$50 each, in July for climbing Sydney's Centrepoint Tower and flying an anti-nuclear flag from it. The Sydney protest was part of a Greenpeace campaign against nuclear weapons at sea, and was matched by a similar demonstration on Auckland Harbour Bridge in New Zealand.



North Queensland rainforest—on the Barron River near Cairns. Paul Curtis

● **Holidays.** ABC TV has announced plans for *Holiday Australia*, a new series on travel. The show aims to give practical information and will include considerable coverage of adventure travel activities.

● **NSW Park News.** The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service plans to evict squatters from the Crater Cove area in Sydney Harbour National Park and 'upgrade' access to the area.

The NSW Government has announced additions to a number of parks in NSW including the Tarlo River National Park (849 hectares added) and Seven Mile Beach National Park (168 hectares added). In addition, it has announced the establishment of the Mt Neville (2,600 hectares) and Wambool (194 hectares) nature reserves. Mt Neville is 60 kilometres north of Grafton, and Wambool is 18 kilometres south-east of Bathurst. The government has also announced plans to spend some \$250,000 on a 'revitalisation program' at Bobbin Head in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

● **Putting Something Back.** Paddy Pallin has published four educational pamphlets for cross country skiers. Available for groups and individuals, they are obtainable through Paddy Pallin shops. The Ski Touring Association of Victoria has recently revised its set of instructional leaflets on ski touring.

The 23rd annual Paddy Pallin Cross Country Ski Classic was held at Perisher Valley, NSW, on 1 August. Paddy Pallin Junior Nordics, events for young cross country skiers, were held at the same location on 12 July.

● **Jiggery-pokery.** In the May issue of the *ACF Newsletter* it is reported how conservationists initially greeted the news of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Authority's proposal to undertake a \$6 million rain-making experiment in Kosciuszko National Park, NSW, with hilarity. However, visions of charlatans 'rain-dancing into the hearts of millions' were replaced by concern when it was realized that the authority is serious.

The proposal involves cloud seeding with silver iodide and dry ice, as well as rain and snow gauges and a repeater network, which will have to be visited regularly. The Mt Jagungal area would be most affected if the proposal was to proceed.

● **Great Balls of Fire.** A slight earthquake was recorded in June near Lithgow, just west of the Blue Mountains, NSW. Shortly after, the Colo River was noticeably dirty. Walkers in the upper Colo, Capertee or Wolgan valleys should look out for a major landslide triggered by the quake that is speculated to have been the source of silt in the river.

Another cause of recent pollution of the Colo River has been rafters neglecting to carry out damaged rafts from the Angorawa Creek junction.

David Noble

● **Frustrating Features.** Has your blood pressure ever been raised by Natmap inaccuracies? Doing something about it may prove more than just therapeutic. Map Correction Report forms are available from the Division of National Mapping, PO Box 31, Belconnen, ACT 2616.



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● **On Show.** The Society for Growing Australian Plants organizes a major wildflower exhibition each year which is claimed to be one of the largest of its type in the world. The 1987 exhibition, or 'Spectacular' as the society calls it, is on 19-20 September in the Castle Hill showground, near Parramatta, NSW.

● **Down the Tube?** It has been reported in the Press that two directors of companies involved in the Blue Cow ski resort in the Snowy Mountains, NSW, have admitted to a Sydney judge that a sham construction contract was used to evade tax on the project. It was reported that, with another company, one of the



Recently constructed duck-boards on Major Mitchell Plateau, Gramplains, Victoria. Felke Schulte. **Right.** competitors in the 1987 Wildtrek Winter Classic enjoyed good snow, high water levels and fine weather, which resulted in fast times in all sections. The open marathon section was won by John Russell and Rob Harris. Further details in next issue. Yvonne McLaughlin

companies concerned is also involved in the construction of the controversial Skitube, a multi-million-dollar rail tunnel through the Snowy Mountains, and that the resort is essential to the success of Skitube. It was further reported that the two Skitube companies recently won approval to construct another controversial tunnel, a road tunnel under Sydney Harbour.

● **Mallee Nature Reserve for NSW.** The NSW Minister for Planning and Environment, Bob Carr, has announced the establishment of the Nominie Nature Reserve in the central west of the State. The reserve, of about 100,000 hectares, is predominantly mallee vegetation with small areas of belah. It is the habitat of endangered birds, including the unusual mallee fowl. The Nominie area is one of a number of areas in western NSW identified as having wilderness value by the NSW Wilderness Working Group.

Roger Lembit

● **Leadership Scheme Falters.** A Bushwalkers Leadership Certificate Scheme being

promoted by the NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs has struck rocky ground. The scheme, to be based on the Victorian and Tasmanian schemes, has faltered because of bureaucratic misunderstanding of its aims, and government cut-backs. The federation had

faint climbers' pad in the Mt Stapylton horseshoe with a major path-system that has been slashed and dug from the bush and extended well beyond the horseshoe to finish with large painted arrows up the summit block of Mt Stapylton.



hoped the Department of Technical and Further Education would implement the scheme under the guidance of the federation. Katoomba TAFE College currently runs a bushwalking guides course which aims to educate tourist guides in the area. Leading bushwalkers consider the Katoomba course is much less demanding than the Victorian course.

RL

● **'Development' of Major Mitchell Plateau.** This area in Victoria's Gramplains National Park, which has been popular with bushwalkers for decades, has recently seen activity by the Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands. A project has commenced to install duck-boards on the walking track. Currently installed at six locations, the boards are officially justified to 'curtail the spread of cinnamon fungus (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) since walkers tend to spread it by kicking the undergrowth around'. Off-track walking in the area is discouraged, and it is understood that the department is considering banning camping on the plateau. At each end of the track, at Boundary Gap and Stockyard Creek, the department has installed boxes containing questionnaires for bushwalkers to 'assist us to adequately protect your future hiking experiences'. However, amongst other things, the leaflet canvasses opinion on the introduction of a (presumably general) permit system for walkers, a permit system for visiting the Major Mitchell Plateau, and knowledge of bureaucratic regulations applicable to both the Major Mitchell Plateau and National Parks generally. In the northern Gramplains, the department has replaced the

● **Victorian Alps.** Last summer members of Maroonah Bushwalking Club made what their leader claims is the 'longest-ever club walk', from Walhalla to Tom Groggin on the Alpine Walking Track, in 30 days. To commemorate this event the club has published a tome entitled *The Great Alpine Track Expedition*, which puts many sagas of major Himalayan expeditions in the shade.

Not to be outdone, in January 1988 four young people from Bendigo, Victoria, plan to ride mountain bikes from Canberra to Walhalla by the Alpine Walking Track. They will make a bumpy start by riding down the steps of Parliament House. Perhaps not surprisingly the Australian Bicentennial Authority has recognized the proposed trip as an 'Endorsed Bicentennial Activity'. (Another such activity is Zoltan Matrahazi's planned traverse of the European Alps, commencing in July 1988 from Nice and ending in Vienna four months later, climbing peaks such as Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn *en route*. The 2,000 kilometre trip will be the first known solo attempt to traverse the entire length of the Alps.)

It is reported that in its relentless drive to 'develop' and control Victoria's few remaining wild places, the Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands plans to 'improve' the vehicle track between the Bluff and Mt Lovick. This track facilitates access to two cattlemens' huts which have been substantially extended in recent years so that their owners can use them as bases for their commercial (horse-riding tours and ski touring) activities in the area. However, the department plans to remove an old snow pole line from nearby Mt Howitt

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because 'pole lines in a remote area such as Mt Howitt are inappropriate'. A short distance from Mt Howitt, and clearly visible from it, is Mt Buller, for which the Victorian Government recently announced 'a \$90 million transformation' of its skiing facilities. (Its multi-storey flats and ski lifts are already visible with the naked eye from Mt Howitt and much further afield.) The government claims that, when

a large (385 x 260 millimetres) forest photo, by David Tatnall, which is one of the best we have seen and would do justice to any bush-lover's wall. Copies can be obtained from the EGC at 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Vic 3000. It would be appropriate to include a donation with

proposed that customers pay \$595 a head to walk the track and stay in the 'all-weather huts with most mod cons' (including hot showers). The proposed huts, to be stocked annually by helicopter, are in addition to the numerous public huts in the National Park.



The Australian Alpine Association expedition to Mt McKinley (6,218 metres), the highest point in North America, climbed the peak by two routes. Jim Van Gelder, Matt Godbold and Andrew Pezel climbed the difficult West Rib, and Rick Moor, James Strothfeld, Scott Terrey and Jeff Williams climbed the original, West Buttress, route. The ascents were made in very poor snow conditions. Terrey (in red) and Moor on the summit, and, right, during the ascent. James Strothfeld.

completed in 1992, Mt Buller's facilities will 'rival the best in the world', and accommodate up to 8,000 skiers and provide facilities for up to 20,000 visitors a day.

Nearer to Melbourne, the department continues its push to 'bureaucratize the bush' with its recent introduction of a charge (currently \$3.00/car) for anyone wishing to visit the Mt St Gwinear region, a popular ski touring area, in winter. The 'toll gate' and building the department has erected for the purpose is too far below the snow line to make skiing (walking) to the snow a realistic alternative to paying the fee. (A similar arrangement exists at Mt Stirling, another popular Victorian ski touring area.)

● **Parks.** Six new Victorian State Parks were created recently: Black Range (11,700 hectares), Angahook-Lorne (2,100 hectares), Mt Lawson (13,150 hectares), Mt Arapiles-Toonan (5,050 hectares), French Island (8,300 hectares) and Barmah, the last of which is to be subject to permanent grazing, logging, and hunting.

● **New Rockclimbing Club.** Established to cater for climbers in Ballarat and surrounding areas, the new Western District Rockclimbing Club can be contacted c/- 71 Maree Crescent, Wendouree, Vic 3355.

● **East Gippsland Logging.** In the continuing battle to save the remaining forest country in this wild part of eastern Victoria, the East Gippsland Coalition has stepped up its campaign with the production and distribution of one of the most impressive conservation pamphlets produced in this country. It includes

requests for the leaflet. In addition to calling for donations to help the campaign, the leaflet suggests writing to your local Member of Parliament, and perhaps volunteering some time to the EGC.

The National Trust recently classified five landscapes in East Gippsland and added the whole area to the list of Significant Regional Landscapes. It is currently formulating policy on future land-use in East Gippsland.

● **Strange Bedfellows.** An alliance between the Wilderness Society and Australian Paper Manufacturers to oppose the granting of a woodchip export licence to Huon Forest Products broke down after only a day.

● **'Developing' Tasmania's Wilderness.** It has been announced that 'the Tasmanian Government is considering further major tourism developments based on Tasmania's unique wilderness areas' including 'potential developments at Port Davey, Bathurst Harbour and Cockle Creek in the South-west'. This move follows the government's recent announcement of a proposed lodge at Warners Landing on the Gordon River.

As foreshadowed by a report in *Wild* no 18, Australia's most famous bushwalk (see *Wild* no 25), the Overland Track in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, has, according to the Tasmanian Government, 'been made accessible to everyone who wants to experience the walk'. A Tasmanian company, Cradle Huts, has been granted the concession to build four private huts in the National Park. Travelling in parties of up to 12 people, it is

● **On With the Show.** Since 1954, the Launceston Walking Club has presented slide and film shows publicizing the scenic wonders of Tasmania in all capital cities and several other centres. This year marks their thirteenth annual visit to Sydney. Presented in co-operation with the Wilderness Society, shows will be at 7.30 pm on 16 and 17 October, and 2 pm on 17 October. In Tasmania, there will be shows in the Museum Theatre, Launceston, at 8 pm on 5, 6, 12 and 13 November, and at Ulverstone on 20 and 21 November.

● **A Different Type of Logging.** Over the last few years, as an on-going project, Adelaide Bushwalkers have placed log books in metal containers at the summits of nine peaks in the Flinders Ranges. In the last 12 months these have included Mt Aleck and Pompey Pillar just south of Wilpena Pound, and Patawarta and Mt Hack in the northern Flinders Ranges.

John Bartlett

● **Across Australia By Camel.** Two adventure travel companies are advertising for starters on 'the Great Australian Camel Traverse 1988' which plans to cross the continent, in ten stages, from west to east. The trip is expected to take some 194 days. Members pay \$13,500 a head to participate in the full crossing, but for suitably reduced fees can join one or more of the ten stages.

● **Kiwis.** On 1 April New Zealand's Ministry and Council for Recreation and Sport were replaced by a single body called the Hillary Commission.



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Christchurch mountaineer, Rob Hall, was recently named the inaugural Macpac Mountaineer of the Year.



Antarctic aspirants Lyle Closs (left), Lincoln Hall, Greg Mortimer and Jon Chester.

● **Antarctica.** Four crew members from the New Zealand-based ketch *Northanger* have made what is believed to be the third or fourth ascent of Mt Français, the highest peak on Anvers Island, a remote and rarely visited Antarctic mountain. The expedition's principal objective has been to climb the virgin peaks on Smith Island, the highest of which is Mt Foster (2,090 metres), but a landing was not possible. (Famous British explorer H W Tilman disappeared in 1977 with his boat and crew on the way to Smith Island.)

In the summer of 1987-8 a small Australian expedition, the Bicentennial Antarctic Expedition, plans to climb one of the highest unclimbed peaks in Antarctica, Mt Minto (4,163 metres), the highest point in the Admiralty Range, North Victoria Land. The members are Jonathan Chester, Lyle Closs, Lincoln Hall and Greg Mortimer.

Using its powerful ice-breaker, *Mikhail Somov*, the Soviet Antarctic Expedition recently evacuated a seriously ill Australian expeditioner from Mawson station in Antarctica. The operation was completed in bad conditions.

Ski tourers 'in exceptionally good physical condition with strong mountain backgrounds and solvent bank accounts' are sought for what is claimed to be the world's first 'adventure travel' journey to the South Pole. Organized by USA Outdoor Mountain Travel, and promoted locally by Ausventure, the 60-day trip departs in November 1988. The cost? Ops, we almost overlooked such a trifle... 'from' \$US69,500 a head.

● **Himalayan News.** A Victorian team led by Jon Muir, and including Lydia Bragay (New Zealand), has returned from India's Gangotri region where they attempted the first traverse of the Kedarnath Peaks. On the first attempt the team was afflicted by altitude sickness and all but Jon Muir and Bradley dropped out before the first summit, Kedarnath Dome (6,850 metres), was reached. Muir and Bradley reached the col between that peak and Kedarnath Peak (6,950 metres) where they spent their fourth and fifth nights on the mountain. An epic descent in a storm followed, during which the pair were avalanche six times but escaped with only minor frostnip. Muir

later returned, alone, to traverse both peaks in a total time of only 37 hours from glacier to glacier, calling his route Dancin' Barefoot.

Bradley and two other members of the expedition, Brigitte Muir and Geoff Little, went on to join a large New Zealand expedition to the Karakoram mountains of Pakistan. Led by Craig Stobo of Wellington, the main objectives of this expedition are Hidden Peak (8,068 metres) and Baltoro Kangri (7,312 metres).

A New Zealand expedition has climbed Shishapangma (8,013 metres), the first 8,000 metre peak climbed by a New Zealand expedition. The summit was reached in May by Dick Price, Steve Bruce, Mike Perry (leader) and Mark Whetu. Whetu, who last December made the first solo ski descent of New Zealand's Mt Cook, by the Zurbriggen Ridge, descended the peak on skis.

A group of ten Canberra-based climbers, led by John Finnigan, will attempt Baruntse (7,220 metres) in eastern Nepal in the pre-monsoon season 1988. In addition, the team will attempt a first ascent of Baruntse Nup (6,840 metres), the western summit of the Baruntse massif, by its spectacular south face. Five of the climbers were members of the Australian National University Mountaineering Club's 1978 expedition to Dunagiri in India.

A British enterprise is organizing 'the world's highest marathon' in November, from Gorak Shep to Namche Bazaar, Nepal. Entries closed on 1 June.

● **Conference.** An international conference on mountain medicine, organized by the International Union of Alpine Associations, is being held in London on 19-20 November. Information: Dr Charles Clarke, St Bartholomew's Hospital, 38 Little Britain, London EC1A 7BE, England.

● **Mexican Madness.** In November the Chilchota '87 expedition will be returning to the Mexican caving area of Zongolica. The group of 15, mainly from Sydney, will spend three months continuing the exploration of this area which was first visited by cavers only two years ago (see the article 'Australians Under Mexico' in *Wild* no 23). This year's expedition will be working on two major objectives. One is to extend the known caves deeper (the deepest, Guixani, has only 60 metres to go to reach 1,000 metres deep). The second objective is to find other caves in the area in the hope of exploring a cave or connection between caves which will give the deepest cave in the world. There is a long way to go to beat the current record of 1,535 metres, but Zongolica has potential for caves 1,900 metres deep.

In April an American expedition found a long sought-after connection between Nita Nanta and Sistema Huautla in Mexico. This brings the depth of the cave system up to 1,379 metres—third deepest in the world.

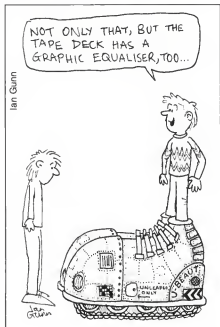
Alan Waril

● **Corrections.** The record-breaking 23½ hours taken by Australian Gary Scott to reach the summit of Mt McKinley (*Wild* no 23, page 23) included a flight from Talkeetna, about 100 kilometres away (an altitude gain of over 6,000 metres in less than 24 hours). Scott actually took only 18½ hours to climb from the Kahiltna Glacier base camp (2,134 metres) to the summit (6,194 metres) and only four hours to descend.

When calculated, the depth of the cave Anou Ifflis in Algeria (*Wild* no 23, page 23) was only 975 metres, not the 1,150 metres estimated depth originally quoted. This new depth is in dispute and all that can be said is that the depth of Anou Ifflis is (hopefully!) somewhere between these two figures.

On page 23 of *Wild* no 24 it is reported that Nettlebed Cave gives the second-deepest caving through-trip in the world. Alan Waril claims that it is only the fourth-deepest.

The claim, on page 67 of *Wild* no 24, that carbon monoxide is heavier than air is incorrect. It is about 3% lighter. However, it



mixes readily with air, making little point in cooking below the floor-level of sleeping areas, as was suggested on the same page.

New Zealand's Steinlager Coast to Coast race starts at Kumara (not Kumaru) on the west coast of the South Island and ends at Sumner Beach on the east coast. (The photo caption on page 25 of *Wild* no 25 is incorrect.)

The cost of the Australian Bicentennial Everest Expedition provided by the expedition's major sponsor and published on page 27 of *Wild* no 25 is incorrect, according to the Secretary of the Expedition Committee, and 'will be of the order of \$450,000'.

Lowie Alpine Systems packs are made in Ireland and distributed by D B Biggs Pty Ltd, 153 Sussex Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, phone (02) 29 1467, and not Verglas Australia as incorrectly stated at the bottom of page 68 of *Wild* no 25.

Photographs of the Wilderness Equipment Guide-Light day-and-a-half pack, the Breakout outdoor education pack, Wilderness Travelpack, pockets and accessories, and Sliptream and Flashback day packs (from left to right) on page 70 of *Wild* no 25 were without captions.

Mt Aconcagua is in Argentina, not Peru as stated in the Puradom sleeping bag brochure inserted in this issue.

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Send contributions to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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Glenn Tempest at Mount Loch, Victoria.
Licola to Kosciuszko ski trip 1986.

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Gearing Up

The art of buying what you need, with *Tom Millar*

Wild Ideas

● THERE ARE FEW THINGS MORE TRAUMATIC than buying gear. The huge array of sophisticated equipment, at what seems to be exorbitant prices, is often enough to keep a fledgling outdoors enthusiast indoors for the rest of his/her life. The purpose of this article is to help you make the right choice when buying gear. In the process I will also shed some light on what goes on 'behind the counter' in gear shops.

Perhaps the single most important step to take, when buying gear, is to decide what the equipment is going to be used for. This may sound obvious, but it is necessary to be quite specific. Questions to ask yourself include: what activities am I going to use it for, where will it be used, and at what times of the year? You should also look into the crystal ball and see what other activities you might take up later.

Once you are equipped with this information you will need advice. Talk to everybody you can — friends, people in your club and shop staff; and read available literature (such as *Wild*, particularly its equipment surveys). What you should be looking for are features which seem a good idea, and brands which have a reputation for good design and reliability. Keep an open mind on the features, because most of them have pros and cons. For example, you might think that a pack with two compartments is a good idea because of improved access. However, most experienced walkers prefer a single compartment because it has fewer seams and zips, and is consequently stronger and more watertight.

You will probably have realized that there are a lot of differing opinions regarding gear. Remember that most people talk from personal experience, and what suits them may not suit you or your activities, so you must extract the information which is applicable to your needs.

Another sensible way to find out about equipment is to try out different types. Some shops and clubs hire out equipment, or perhaps you could try borrowing from a friend. Cross country skis, in particular, are readily hired.

A check-list of features you are looking for can make shopping easier. This is an example of a list I made when looking for a tent recently:

- Good rain- and snow-shedding shape.
- Stable in high winds.
- Storm-guy attachment points.
- Large vestibule space.
- Inner tent big enough for two people to sit side by side.
- Fly pitches first with the inner hanging from it.
- Good ventilation between inner and fly.
- Continuous sleeves in fly for poles to slide into.
- Fly netting on inner tent door.
- Weight under 3.5 kilograms.
- Price under \$500.

You may not have such definite criteria, but as you continue researching, you will recognize worthwhile features. For a complex item (like a tent), you can draw up a table, with the products you have looked at on one axis and a list of required features on the other, ticking where a product has the particular feature. The

table then acts as a good aid to your memory and makes comparison easy.

It is well worth patronizing specialist shops. There is a listing of these in the back of this magazine. As well as selling gear, specialist shops offer almost unlimited advice. Try to avoid shopping in a rush or at the last minute, but find a time when the shop is quiet and you have plenty of time.

Fortunately shop staff in the outdoors industry are not usually paid on a commission basis, but a wage so, on the whole, advice will be honestly given, without too much sales hype. If, however, you do find a salesperson over-zealous in trying to make a sale, you may be better off shopping elsewhere, or talking to a

... it is even more important to get out there and use it.' Photo Andrew Barnes

different salesperson. Unfortunately though, as competition is fierce within the industry, you probably will not find salespeople sending you 'round the corner' to another shop, as they once did if they could not help you.

Shop staff are usually experienced in the outdoors, although you might find an individual not experienced in all disciplines. For example, a rockclimber may not go bushwalking or vice versa, so find somebody familiar with the activity you do. Even better, try to talk to somebody with a similar body-shape to yours. For example, if you are a short woman, another short woman will probably have a better idea of what will fit you.

There are distinct differences between salespeople. Some are extremely verbose, and you wonder if they will ever stop talking. Others



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are more reserved. Often the quiet ones have a wealth of knowledge, but you might have difficulty extracting it from them. Remember, shop staff are human too, and if you are overbearing or discourteous a salesperson may be unhelpful. Opinions on gear can differ widely so, once again, make your own conclusions from what they say.

Walking into a shop, one of the first things you will notice is the high price of gear. Imported articles, in particular, have become expensive with the fall in value of the Australian dollar. The prices of other items, such as sleeping bags, have been going up steadily for many years. You should be aware that a good quality, reliable, comfortable product is not going to be cheap. This leads to a warning: beware of cheap goods! There is nothing worse than the bottom of your pack falling out half way through a long walk. If you cannot afford a quality item, then it is better to hire or borrow one until you can. Here again you must look at your needs. Do not buy a sleeping bag which will keep you warm on the summit of Mt Everest if you are only going to use it on your aunty's living room couch.

Sales and specials are sometimes (but not always) worth looking out for. Shops have sales either to entice customers, to get rid of items not selling well (dead stock), and/or when they need money to pay bills. If you can find a suitable, good quality product going cheap, that is great, but do not buy something which does not really suit your needs just because it is cheap. If you are unusually big or small, or have an uncommon foot size, sales can be a good time to purchase clothing or boots.

Often products are given ratings. For example, packs have volumes rated in litres and sleeping bags have warmth ratings in degrees celsius. There is no Australian standard for these and they can be misleading. They should be backed up by your own observations. If one pack looks bigger than another, then it probably is. Similarly, lay sleeping bags out on the floor because, generally speaking, a thicker bag will be warmer than a thinner bag.

Have a close look at the quality of a product. Check its seams. Fraying edges are a bad sign. Double stitching, and strong reinforcing at stress points, is desirable. If you are doubtful as to how waterproof a fabric is, suck it and see. If you can suck air through it, then chances are water will also penetrate. Feel the quality of down. If you can feel 'chook feathers', then it is not the best quality. There are often big variations in down quality between brands—even within a brand.

Try products on. Have a pack fitted to your back, and load it up with something heavy. Get inside a sleeping bag and see how it is for room. Compare sleeping mats for comfort by lying on them. Do not be embarrassed—you need this information to make the correct decision.

How gear looks hanging up has a big bearing on how well it sells, and colour is an important part of this. Do not let this sway you too much. The function of outdoors gear is more important than its looks. Certainly though, if you have a short list of equally suitable items, then go for the one that looks best to you.

Be cautious of placing special customer orders, particularly if you need the item by a specific date. Problems often arise with special orders, despite the best intentions by salespersons.

Wild Ideas

Whether you visit just your local shop or every shop in the city is up to you, but let me tell you about buying my first set of cross country skis. After spending some time at one shop selecting a pair suitable for my needs, I then went around every ski shop in Melbourne checking the prices. Finally I found a pair 50 cents cheaper at another shop, so I purchased them there. I later found out that the apparently cheaper shop charged five dollars to mount the bindings, whereas the first shop, which had given me all the advice, charged nothing. I would recommend purchasing from the shop which gives you the best service and advice, even if it is slightly more expensive there.



By now you should be narrowing the field down considerably. If you are having problems finding something suitable, it may be because you want it to suit too many different conditions. For example, do not expect a white-water kayak to be any use in the Murray River Marathon.

Alternatively you might just be bamboozled from seeing too many products in too short a time. At this stage step back from it for a while. Just going and having a cup of coffee can help, or perhaps you need to mull it over for a few days. Do not feel an expectation to purchase there and then.

When you do come to purchase an item, check it. A quick inspection to see that it has no obvious flaws, and is the same as the one on display, is well worth while. If an item has a number of parts, like a tent or a cook-set, see if all the parts are there. Make sure you have instructions on how to use it, both verbal and written. Check that skis are matched pairs, and that they have registration numbers on their sides. Boots also should look like a pair. Some expensive models are made from the same piece of leather and have registration numbers inside. Unfortunately boots often get put back into the wrong boxes after trying on. Ask about any guarantee given and make sure you get a receipt—it could come in useful if you have any problems with the equipment and need proof of purchase.

You can now walk out of the shop satisfied. Remember though, while it is important to buy the right piece of gear, it is even more important to get out there and use it. **W**

Tom Millar (see Contributors in *Wild* no 4) lives an 'outdoor' life in north-east Victoria. An experienced bushwalker, cross country skier and mountaineer, he has climbed and skied in New Zealand, Europe and the Himalayas. He had long experience working in specialist outdoor shops before joining *Wild's* staff, and now works as a cross country ski instructor.

Wild Bushwalking

John and
Monica
Chapman
select
the island
State's
finest
walks

TASMANIA'S Big Walks

● THE TINY ISLAND STATE OF TASMANIA CONTAINS the finest bushwalking areas in Australia. With its extremes of weather, rugged terrain and notorious vegetation it provides challenges suitable for the most experienced bushwalker. Good all-round skills are needed for navigation, route selection and campsite finding. Common sense is essential. The rewards are great for the adventurous, as many beautiful lakes, forests, peaks and lovely coastlines are there to be explored. Most of the extended walks are located in the western half of the State, an area of very high rainfall. This is no accident, as the abundance of water has created many of the State's attractive features. We all prefer dry trips, but bushwalkers in Tasmania must expect cold bleak weather for much of the time. When

to Queenstown has a regular all-year bus service from Monday to Saturday. This is run by Redline Coaches, telephone (002) 34 4577, 96 Harrington Street, Hobart 7000. In the north, a daily service operates in the summer from Devonport to Cradle Valley. This leaves from 12 Edward Street, Devonport 7310, and is operated by Staffords Coaches, telephone (004) 24 3628, Lower Barrington 7306. Mountain Stage Line, telephone (003) 31 4240, c/- 124 St John Street, Launceston 7250, also operates regular services during the summer from Launceston to both ends of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. The other major access for some walks is by light aircraft to either Cox Bight or Melaleuca in the South-west. Tasair, telephone (002) 48 5088, GPO Box 451E, Hobart

Western Arthurs

● THIS RANGE IS THE MOST SPECTACULAR AND rugged in the State and has become very popular with bushwalkers. In our opinion it is the best high-level walk in Tasmania, providing beautiful scenery, wild terrain and fickle weather. See *Wild* no 25 for detailed notes for a nine- to twelve-day walk along the crest of this range.

Federation Peak

● FEDERATION PEAK IS AN IMPRESSIVE ROCKY tower in the Eastern Arthur Range in the South West National Park. It is not the highest peak in the area, but with its massive cliffs and distinctive thumb-like shape it is a dominant landmark. The major routes to this peak are easily followed, but are very rough with mud, steep gullies and rocky slopes. The ascent of Federation Peak is a major goal for many bushwalkers and a visit to the Eastern Arthurs involves steep scrambling and often an epic retreat. The most enjoyable approach is from the north along the crest of the Eastern Arthur Range. This route is so spectacular that it is recommended for use as both the approach and return. Eight to twelve days should be allowed for this walk. Detailed track notes are described in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman. The range can be approached from either Scotts Peak Dam, as for the Western Arthurs, or by the Huon Track. Scotts Peak is recommended as it provides a flat approach with interesting views of the surrounding ranges. During summer Bushwalkers Transport runs an excellent regular bus service along this road.

From Scotts Peak follow the Port Davey Track south to Junction Creek then turn east and follow the Arthur Plains track to Two Mile Creek to camp. Continue to follow the track east to Cracroft Crossing. From the shelter hut follow a very muddy track south-west into a saddle on the Razorback Ridge. This provides the first view of Federation Peak. The track swings south, crossing Strike Creek, and continues to the foot of Luckmans Lead. Camp at the good camping area near Pass Creek. Climb south up the steep ridge to Stuart Saddle. The track then deteriorates to a rough route and sidles the eastern and then western slopes of the Needles, using gullies and terraces to reach the open spaces of Goon Moor. Camp on the northern or eastern sides of this moor. Continue to follow the crest of the range south past the Gables and through the rugged Four Peaks to Thwaites Plateau. This is an elevated moor about one kilometre north-west of Federation Peak and has reasonable campsites on its northern edge. Without packs follow the moor crest south-east, then east along the Southern Traverse to the final steep climb to the summit of Federation Peak. Care is required on the climb and, so far, one walker has fallen and been killed. To finish the day a visit to Hanging Lake and Gieves Bluff is highly recommended. Return to Scotts Peak following the same route over the Eastern Arthurs and along the Arthur Plains.

Maps. *Old River*, 1:100,000 topographic. Published by the Tasmanian Lands Department (Tasmap), 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart, Tas 7000. *Eastern Arthur Range*, 1:25,000, topographic, Hobart Walking Club.



The monarch of the South-west, Federation Peak, seen from Precipitous Bluff. All photos John Chapman except where otherwise indicated. Left, Precipitous Bluff, or PB to generations of bushwalkers, and New River Lagoon. Grant Dixon

the sun does shine it should be treated as a bonus, and thoroughly enjoyed. The best chance of fine weather is from January to March and most of the hard rough walks are attempted in this period. During the rest of the year extended walking is advised only around the coastline or on established tracks.

The routes described here are all extended bushwalks that cross the best wild areas of the State. Many good walks had to be left out. Keep to the better known routes, which are described here or in guidebooks, until considerable experience has been gained in all weathers and areas. The main guidebooks are *Cradle Mountain National Park* by John Siseman and John Chapman and *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman. Useful articles can be found in *The Tasmanian Tramp* and *Skyline*, which are club publications and are usually available in Tasmanian walking shops.

Access by public transport is good during summer. Bushwalkers Transport, telephone (002) 34 2226, 28 Criterion Street, Hobart 7000, runs a regular bus service on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays along the Maydena Road to Scotts Peak. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the bus runs south to Cockle Creek. The Lyell Highway from Hobart

7001, and Par-Avion, telephone (002) 48 5390, PO Box 300, Sandy Bay 7005, both make charter flights from Cambridge Airport near Hobart.

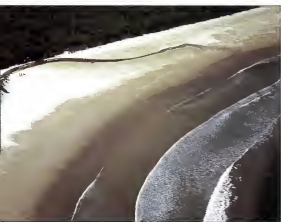
So far, permits are only required to walk the Overland Track. No permits are required in any other areas, but all bushwalkers should visit a police station in Tasmania to register their walk before commencing. It is important to de-register upon returning. The Tasmanian Lands Department (Tasmap), telephone (002) 30 8011, 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart 7000, publishes an excellent set of topographic maps to the entire State at a 1:100,000 scale. These maps are stocked in Tasmanian walking shops and in major walking shops in Melbourne and Sydney.

The Overland Track

● THIS IS THE MOST FAMOUS OF TASMANIA'S walking tracks. Superb scenery and an extensive hut and track system have helped to maintain its popularity. See *Wild* no 25 for detailed notes for a seven- to ten-day walk along this track.

South Coast and Port Davey Tracks

● IN THE SOUTH WEST NATIONAL PARK THERE IS a marked walking track along the southern coastline called the South Coast Track. This connects with the Port Davey Track which leads through the river valleys north to Scotts Peak.



New Harbour Beach, South-west Cape. **Right**, Hidden Bay, South-west Cape. **Far right**, sunset on the summit of Frenchmans Cap. Three hundred and fifty metre cliffs plunge vertically from within metres of where the figure is standing. Michael Collier

The combination of these two tracks is a classic extended walk and is highly recommended to walkers of all standards. This walk is less exposed compared to many other long bushwalks as most of the walking is near the sea and on button grass plains. Delays due to the weather can still occur as streams flood after heavy inland rainfall. The tracks are easy to follow and usually very muddy. Twelve to fifteen days are required to complete both tracks. This is not a circuit walk and requires the use of public transport. During the summer this is provided by Bushwalkers Transport to both ends of the track. The southern access point is Cockle Creek, which is 100 kilometres south of Hobart. The northern access point is Scotts Peak, used for both the Western Arthurs and Federation Peak. Detailed track notes are described in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman. The walk can easily be completed in either direction. The north-south direction is preferable as it leaves some of the more interesting areas until near the end.

From Scotts Peak follow the Port Davey Track south to camp at Junction Creek. Follow the track west, past the Western Arthurs to Crossing River, and then to camp in the Spring River valley. The track leads south-west to the Lost World Plateau then south to cross Spring River to camp. Continue south to camp at Bathurst Narrows, then south again next day to camp at Melaleuca. An easy half day leads to Cox Bight, the first of the ocean beaches and a pleasant overnight stop. Follow the beach then the button grass plains east to camp at Louisa River, at the foot of the Ironbound Range. Climb steeply over the Ironbounds and down to camp near the shelter hut at Little Deadmans Bay. A pleasant day's walk east along beaches and plains leads to camps at Osmiridium Beach or Surprise Bay. This area is very exploring, and it is only a half day to the next camp at the east end of Granite Beach. Another climb leads east over the muddy South Cape Range to a



camp at South Cape Rivulet. For the final half day follow the route along the beach and rocks then inland across the plains to Cockle Creek.

Maps. *Old River and South Cape*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

South-west Cape

● THE SOUTH-WESTERN CORNER OF THE STATE has a spectacular rugged cape which juts out for three kilometres into the Southern Ocean. Near the cape are several interesting beaches and high headlands, providing classic coastal scenery. This circuit has always been one of our favourite walks in the South-west, as the walking is relatively easy and the weather conditions are often pleasant compared to the higher inland ranges. There are no marked tracks, but the major route is well used and fairly easy to follow. The circuit begins and ends at Melaleuca in the south-western corner of the South West National Park. It is possible to approach Melaleuca by the South Coast or Port Davey Tracks (see previous walk) or to fly in by light aircraft. Tasair or Par-Avion can be chartered, but all flights are dependent on the weather conditions (like everything else in the South-west). Six to ten days should be allowed for the full circuit; the suggested itinerary is for eight days. Detailed track notes are found in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman.

From Melaleuca walk south across the open button grass plains (it is not necessary to follow the South Coast Track) to New Harbour to camp. Next day follow the ridges and bays west for half a day past Hidden Beach to Ketcham Bay to camp. Another half day leads over the Amy Range to Wilson Bight to camp again.

These bays are so lovely that it is worth spending some time there instead of passing through quickly. From Wilson Bight visit South-west Cape as a day trip. Next day walk north along the South-west Cape Range and descend west to camp at Window Pane Bay. An old staked track can then be followed north to Noyhener Beach. It is worth visiting Stephens Bay and Hilliard Head as another day trip, then a long day's walk east across the low ranges and plains brings you back to Melaleuca.

Maps. *Old River, South West Cape and Port Davey*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

Frenchmans Cap Circuit

● THIS ABRUPT WHITE MOUNTAIN STANDS ON the southern side of the Lyell Highway close to Queenstown. It has always been a popular peak with bushwalkers. Combined with a visit to the Irenabys Gorge on the Franklin River, it makes an enjoyable bushwalk on marked tracks. Some of the route is very muddy, and Li-Lo's should be carried for exploring the gorge and for crossing the Franklin River. Four to six days are required to complete this walk. The walk is not quite a complete circuit as it starts near Artists Hill on the Lyell Highway 29 kilometres west of Derwent Bridge, and ends at Victoria Pass a further 25 kilometres west. Redline Coaches operates a Monday-to-Saturday bus service along this highway all year. Detailed track notes are found in *Cradle Mountain National Park* by John Siseman and John Chapman.



From Artists Hill follow the walking track to a flying fox over the Franklin River then south-west over Mt Mullens to the Loddon River. This is a good place for the first night's camp for late starters. Continue along the walking track to Lake Vera and on to Lake Tahune to camp. Next day climb Frenchmans Cap as a side trip, and explore the area. Climb to the Lions Head and descend north-west along the open ridge, following a rough track to the Franklin River. Use a Li-Lo to cross the river to camp. Explore the Irenabyss Gorge for the afternoon. Climb steeply on to a hill then follow the twisting ridge northwards to Flat Bluff. Continue north on to the Raglan Lyre Track and descend, via Bubs Hill, to the Lyell Highway at Victoria Pass.

Maps. *Franklin*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap. *Frenchmans Cap*, 1:50,000, topographic, Tasmap.

Traveller and Cheyne Ranges

● THE CRADLE MOUNTAIN-LAKE ST CLAIR National Park (the Reserve) has an endless variety of extended bushwalks. In recent years routes coming across the Central Plateau from the Walls of Jerusalem have been popular. This circuit walk around the southern end of the Reserve is as enjoyable as any of the other long walks in this park. Most of this route is exposed to the (often poor) weather, and traverses alpine moors and lakes, craggy peaks and a mild amount of scrub. The walk starts and ends at Cynthia Bay, which is the main Ranger station

at the southern end of the park. A regular bus service operated by Redline Coaches passes Derwent Bridge, six kilometres to the south. Ten to twelve days are needed for this circuit. There are no track notes to most of the route. Useful information about the park and tracks around Pine Valley are contained in *Cradle Mountain National Park* by John Siseman and John Chapman.

From Cynthia Bay follow the main road south-east for three kilometres then turn north and walk a further three kilometres to the dam and pumping station at the southern end of Lake St Clair. Cross the dam wall and walk north through light forest, climbing gradually up on to the Traveller Range. Camp near Mt Ida. Next day, (without packs) climb Mt Ida then continue with packs northwards across the maze of lakes that cover the range. Camp near the Orion Lakes. Next day descend steeply into Du Cane Gap then climb abruptly north on to Falling

for three kilometres to the Navarre River, turn north-west and follow the foot track up on to Mt Rufus, then descend east along the track back to Cynthia Bay.

Maps. *Cradle Mtn-Lake St Clair National Park*, 1:100,000, topographic, Du Cane, 1:25,000, topographic, Tasmap.

Frankland and Wilmot Ranges

● THE FRANKLAND AND WILMOT RANGES TOWER over the western edge of Lake Pedder Dam in the South West National Park. The crests of these ranges are a mixture of open moors,



Mountain. Follow the range crest westwards to camp in the sunken bowl on top of Mt Massif. Scramble south through Big Gun Pass, climb Mt Geryon's North Peak as a side trip and follow the Labyrinth south to camp near Lake Ophion. If weather and time permit it is worth while climbing Walled Mountain, which stands to the west. Continue south over the Minotaur and Mt Gould to the Gould Plateau and descend using the tracks to Narcissus Hut. Follow the tracks south-west over Byron Gap to Lake Petrarch. Leave the tracks and walk south across the plains and through light forest to Lake Hermione to camp. Walk west through light forest to an unnamed lake, then south-west up on to the highest section of the Cheyne Range. Follow the open tops south, then a short scrub bash leads to a large unnamed lake three kilometres north of Mt Gell and camp. Follow the ridge south to Mt Gell then descend steeply north-east to the lakes below, and camp at the outlet of the second lake. This unnamed lake is known by bushwalkers as Lake Australia. Follow the creek downstream to Lake Undine, wade along its shores, then follow the button grass plains south-east to Lake Dixon to camp. Walk east through open forest following a faint track to meet the Rufus Canal Road. Follow this road

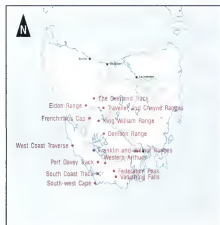
craggy peaks and thick scrub bands typical of the South-west. This traverse is highly recommended for experienced bushwalkers. There are several beautiful lakes and a couple of very spectacular peaks to climb. The traverse is not a circuit and requires seven to ten days to complete. From the north the walk starts from the Serpentine Dam, 13 kilometres west of Strathgordon. There is no public transport to this dam, but if required a special booking can be made with Bushwalkers Transport. The southern end of the walk is Scotts Peak, where the regular Bushwalkers Transport bus can be met. It is best to walk from north to south, as transport is much easier to arrange. Detailed track notes are described in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman.

From the Serpentine Dam climb steeply west to the crest of the Wilmot Range, then walk south over Mt Sprent and on to camp at Islet Lake. This is a very long day without reasonable intermediate campsites. Continue south on to the Frankland Range to camp near Sceptre Lake. Climb Coronation Peak as a short side trip and walk south-east over Double Peak and continue on to camp on Citadel Shelf near the Moat. The Citadel can be climbed as a side trip and requires some rockclimbing skills to ascend

its west face. Continue to follow the range south-east over Greycap to some rather rough camping areas in Frankland Saddle. An easy climb south-east leads to the summit of Frankland Peak. Descend very steeply east from the summit to the saddle below. This requires some rockclimbing. Continue east over Secheron Peak and walk easily along to Terminal Peak. Descend south-east to camp near Lake Pedder Dam. Follow the dam shore south then east to Scotts Peak to meet the Bushwalkers Transport bus.

Maps: *Olga, Wedge and Old River*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

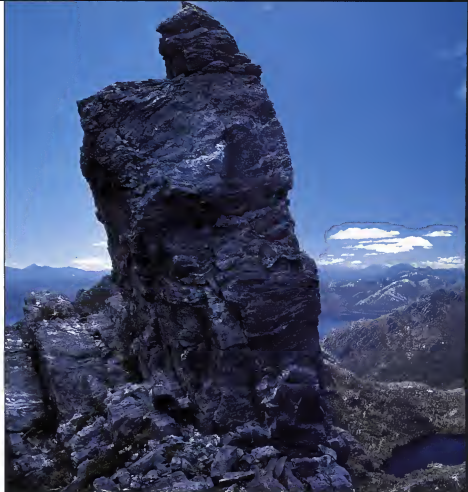
12 Tasmanian Walks



Denisons, Spires and King William Traverse

● THESE THREE SMALL RANGES PROVIDE SOME excellent walking in the area to the south of the Lyell Highway, with a mixture of button grass plains, craggy peaks and a small amount of scrub and rainforest. Currently none of this area is within a National Park, but hopefully it will receive protection in the near future. There are several popular short walks, but the classic route is to visit all three ranges. Allow eight to twelve days to complete the walk, which is not a circuit, and requires the use of public transport. The southern access point is from Timbs Track, on the Strathgordon road, 23 kilometres west of Maydena. During summer Bushwalkers Transport operates a regular bus service past the track on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. The northern access point is at King William Creek, on the Lyell Highway, 13 kilometres south-west of Derwent Bridge. Redline Coaches operates a regular bus service in both directions along this highway all year from Monday to Saturday. The suggested walk is from south to north, but it can easily be completed in either direction.

Follow Timbs Track north for three kilometres then turn west to the Florentine River where there are ideal campsites for late starters. Cross the river using the bridge and follow the track heading north (the track heading west leads to Adamsville) into the forest then across the Gordon Plains to the Gordon River. This has large, excellent camping areas for the first



The Frankland Range. Part of the Lake Pedder Impoundment can be seen beyond the small lake. Right, another environmental disaster—Lake Rhona in the Denison Range, showing the effects of a fire lit by a logging company.

night's stop. Cross the river by either wading or using the flying fox, and follow the overgrown track north to Gordonvale. Some flattened ruins are located in this grassy clearing. Continue to follow the indistinct track north-west a further six kilometres then turn west and climb steeply up to Lake Rhona to camp. From the lake climb south then swing back north over Great Dome, passing Reeds Peak, to Bonds Craig. Descend north-west along the obvious spur (a faint track helps in the scrub) then walk west across Badger Flat to Lake Curly to camp. Some parties take two days for this section, camping on the north-west side of Bonds Craig.

From Lake Curly there is an excellent day trip to Windy Lake, Shining Mountain, Conical Mountain and Mt Curly. Next day move camp west to the Reverend Creek valley and visit the Flame, the Camel and White Pyramid as another side trip. Next day follow the valley of the Gell River north-east for 12 kilometres, avoiding the scrub where possible, and camp near the river. Leave the river where it sweeps south-east and climb up on to an old airstrip on top of the hill. Follow the old track north for nine kilometres, passing a second airstrip, to the major creek east of Mt King William III. Push west through the scrub and climb the spur one kilometre north of the mountain. Camp can be made on the range just north of the spur. Follow the crest of the King William Range north over Mt King William II and down through forest into the deep gap of Top End River. The small lake provides a good campsite. Climb north through the scrub then follow the alpine moors north to Mt King William I. Descend north-east, following the track markers for one and a half kilometres, then turn left (north) and follow the foot track to the Lyell Highway.

Maps: *Wedge and Nive*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

Eldon Range

● THE ELDON RANGE IS A RUGGED, LITTLE-known range on the south-western edge of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. It consists of jagged peaks, lakes, thick scrub and forest and is recommended for experienced off-track bushwalkers. It receives very few visitors because both ends of the range are flanked by dense vegetation. It is usual to walk from west to east, allowing the prevailing westerly winds to blow from behind. Access is from the Lyell Highway, which is the Hobart-to-Queenstown road. Redline Coaches operates a Monday-to-Saturday bus service in both directions along this highway. This is very useful as the traverse is not a circuit and the bus conveniently passes each end. Parties should allow six to nine days to complete the full traverse. There are no published notes on the range, but an interesting article in *Tasmanian Tramp* no 25 provides some information. The western end of the route starts at the King River Bridge, 13 kilometres east of Queenstown. The eastern end of the route is at Cynthia Bay, six kilometres north of Derwent Bridge.

From the King River Bridge follow the east bank of the river upstream using some old roads, button grass plains, and then the forest along the river bank to avoid the thick scrub called 'the Lawns'. This leads to the river junction east of Marble Bluff and makes a reasonable campsite. It takes about half a day to walk from the road to the junction. Continue upstream for one kilometre along the north branch of the Eldon River, climb east then north-east through the scrub to Eldon Peak. Most parties camp beside the small tarns near the summit. Follow the main range eastwards through a deep saddle then north-east to Eldon Bluff. This part of the range provides very rough walking over huge boulders, scree and alpine scrub. From the small saddle between the twin



summits of Eldon Bluff descend the very steep gully west to Lake Ewart (a rope may be needed). This provides good camping after a long day from Eldon Peak. From the lake walk south through the scrub for one kilometre then follow the broad ridge east. The route now follows the twisting scrubby ridge towards High Dome and there is reasonable camping at the small lake south of this peak. It is worth while climbing High Dome if time permits. Continue to follow the twisting ridge south then eastwards over Pyramid Mountain and Little Sugarloaf to Coal Hill. From Coal Hill descend directly to Lake Mingundie. From High Dome to the lake requires about two days' walking without any obvious camping areas, and a rough campsite will be necessary. From Lake Mingundie walk east across the plains to Lake Petrarck and follow the tracks south to Cynthia Bay. This is the main Ranger station for the southern end of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. Next morning it is a short, six kilometre, walk to Derwent Bridge to catch the Redline bus.

Maps. *Franklin, Sophia and Cradle Mtn-Lake St Clair National Park*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

Vanishing Falls

● LOCATED ON THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE South West National Park, these falls are surrounded by dense scrub and have only been visited by very experienced bushwalkers. The falls are spectacular, about 70 metres high, and below them the river disappears underground into the limestone. This is a long rough trip and 14 to 18 days are required to complete it. It is not a circuit. The northern access is the Farmhouse Creek Track, located 25 kilometres west of Geeveston. The southern access is from Lune River, which is 15 kilometres north of Cockle Creek and has a regular bus service,

provided by Bushwalkers Transport, during the summer. It is best to start from Farmhouse Creek, and Bushwalkers Transport can be booked for this approach. There are no detailed notes for the first half of the walk. For the second half a detailed description is found in *South West Tasmania* by John Chapman.

Follow the Farmhouse Creek Track southwest for four kilometres then turn left (south) and follow a marked track south to Lake Sydney to camp. Climb on to the Boomerang and Mt Bobs, then follow the untracked scrubby ridge of Bobs Knobs south to the Salisbury River. This will take two to three days of very rough walking. Follow the river bed upstream for half a day to Vanishing Falls, then upstream for two kilometres, then walk south-south-west through the scrub. Take advantage of the less scrubby slopes, and after three kilometres you meet the Salisbury River. Aerial photos help navigation. Follow the river upstream for four kilometres

beauty. Very few bushwalkers have ever visited this coast and there are no tracks. The walking consists of rocky scrambles, 'beach bashing', button grass plains and the inevitable scrub bashes. Most of the rivers are easily waded except after heavy rainfalls, and a lightweight Li-Lo should be carried for deep crossings. Parties should allow 22 to 30 days for the full traverse of the coast. Most parties will require air drops, and Point Hibbs, Low Rocky Point and Bond Bay are suitable sites. Permission for this is required from Tasmania's National Parks & Wildlife Service, which will provide details of its requirements. The walk starts from Strahan where it is necessary to arrange with a commercial tour boat to be dropped on the south side of Macquarie Harbour near Wellington Head. The traverse finishes at Scotts Peak where the Bushwalkers Transport bus can be met during summer. There are no track notes available for this route.



to a ten metre waterfall, then climb south up scrubby slopes to the large saddle known as PB Low Camp, on the eastern side of Precipitous Bluff. From the falls to the Low Camp will take two to three days. Climb Precipitous Bluff as an easy day trip. Follow the rough tracks eastward along the Southern Ranges, camping at Wyllie Plateau, Ooze Lake, and Moonlight Creek. Descend to Mystery Creek and out to Ida Bay to meet the Bushwalkers Transport bus.

Maps. *Huon and South East Cape*, 1:100,000, topographic, Tasmap.

West Coast Traverse

● THE TRAVERSE OF THE WEST COAST FROM Macquarie Harbour south to Port Davey is one of the longest and most enjoyable walks in the State. There are no high mountains or lakes, but the isolation of this rugged coastline has its own

From Wellington Head follow the vehicle track north-west to visit the Cape Sorell lighthouse. Follow the coast south. The tracks soon end and it is about five days' easy walk along the beaches and coastal plains to Point Hibbs. South of the point the coastline becomes very rugged and is backed by thick scrub. It is a slow eight to ten days to Low Rocky Point. Continue easily east then south-east along the coast for another six to seven days to Kelly Basin and Bond Bay. It is worth while visiting Davey Head as a day trip for its magnificent views of Port Davey. From Bond Bay walk north for six kilometres then swim across the Davey River (Li-Los are helpful) to Settlement Point. Follow the plains for a further six kilometres to camp at and visit Davey Gorge. Walk east across the low hills and plains over Davey SL to meet the Port Davey Track and camp in the Spring River valley. Follow the track north-east to Junction Creek to camp and out to Scotts Peak to meet the Bushwalkers Transport bus.

Maps. *Cape Sorell, Spero, Olga, Port Davey and Old River*, 1:100,000 topographic, Tasmap. W

John and Monica Chapman (see Contributors in *Wild* nos 1 and 25) are among Australia's most travelled bushwalking writers. John is particularly well known for his books of Tasmanian track notes.

STAYING WARM

Barry Holcombe discusses the science of keeping warm

● READERS WILL HAVE NOTICED THAT THE language used to describe outdoor clothing has become increasingly more technical over the last few years. This is partly due to innovations in fibre engineering, but it is also a response to a change in consumer demand. Walkers and skiers want the best possible gear, and the traditional wool shirt and oilskin are facing stiff competition.

What is it about clothing that keeps us warm? Why do we feel more comfortable in some clothing than others? How do modern products compare with those of the past?

Why we must keep warm

Putting aside the demands of modesty and fashion, clothing is essential for us to survive in climates outside the tropics. The temperature of our vital organs must stay close to 37°C to function properly. A rise or fall of only a few degrees in the temperature of the body core disrupts the metabolic system so extensively that unless steps are quickly taken, the outcome can be fatal.

The conversion of energy stored in the body into physical motion is very inefficient, and produces a lot of waste heat. The amount varies enormously with different activities, which is shown in Table 1.

All this heat must be passed into the surroundings to prevent the core temperature rising. The body has an elaborate system to control the rate it loses heat. By varying blood flow to control skin temperature, and encouraging the evaporation of perspiration from the skin surface, the core temperature is kept constant.

Table 1. Relative heat output

activity	units of output
sleeping	1.0
sitting at rest	1.5
typewriting rapidly	2.2
walking at 4.2 km/h	3.1
walking at 6 km/h	4.6
swimming	7.7
climbing stairs	16.9

The rate of non-evaporative heat loss from the body is determined by the difference in temperature between the core and its surroundings, and the amount of insulation in between. The body adjusts its skin temperature by changing blood

flow to the tissue just below the surface, and involuntary adjustment is possible for a reasonably wide range of conditions without us sensing discomfort. As an example, Figure 1 illustrates the case of a person in a room with an air temperature of 20°C, showing how the temperature decreases through the various components.

Figure 1. Heat loss through clothing



The solid area indicates how the skin temperature alters to accommodate the different heat flows during a range of activity levels when no clothing is added or removed. Ambient temperatures above about 25°C do not require clothing for comfort when activity is low. Below this, we must add clothing to lower the heat loss, or increase the level of activity and thus the heat output so that conditions can be brought back into the range that the body can cope with.

Table 2. Conductivity of textile fibres

Material	Conductivity relative to air
Air	1
Clothing	1.5-2
Polyester	5
Polypropylene	5
PVC	7
Wool	7
Acrylic	8
Nylon	9
Rayon	11
Cotton	18
Water	33

What is insulation?

The thermal insulation of a material is its resistance to heat flow. The greater the insulation, the lower the heat flow, or for a given heat flow, the greater difference in temperature between opposite sides of the material.

Textiles are mixtures of air and fibres, with air comprising as much as 95% of the total volume of loose, open materials

such as underwear and jacket padding. With densely woven fabrics the proportion of air decreases, although generally not below about 60-70%. Heat flow by convection and infra-red radiation through



On Lake St Clair, Tasmania, in June. Phil Hill collection
most textile materials is negligible, although some exceptions will be discussed later. Almost all heat flows by conduction through the air and fibres.

Since textiles consist mainly of air, their thermal properties are much closer to those of air than fibres. As Table 2 shows, most fibres conduct heat between five and ten times more rapidly than air, and yet clothing fabrics only conduct heat one and a half to two times more rapidly.

Warmth to the touch

Some fabrics feel warmer to touch than others. A crisp cotton shirt donned first thing on a cold morning causes the goosebumps to rise far more than a brushed cotton singlet. This cold feeling does not last long, and is due to a sensation sometimes called 'warmth to the touch'.

When warm skin and cold clothing are first brought into contact, heat flows from the skin into the surface of the clothing, raising the clothing temperature. The heat flow is rapid at first, then decreases as the garment warms up to body temperature. The more rapid the initial heat flow, the more aware we are of the fabric being cold. The rate of heat flow during this warming period depends mainly on the

area of contact between skin and clothing.

Cotton or silk sheets are examples of fabrics which normally feel cool when first touched. They have a smooth surface with very few protruding fibres, and the area of contact is high. Cotton flannelette, wool knitwear and brushed or raised woven fabrics all have soft, hairy surfaces which feel warm at first touch because the skin makes contact with a relatively small number of projecting fibres.

This phenomenon can be misleading. Cotton flannelette, which has an agreeable 'touch' warmth, is not thick enough if worn on its own to keep the body warm in extremes of cold, whereas a down-filled jacket with a smooth liner fabric chills the skin when first donned, but insulates the body very well against cold. Warmth to the touch should not be confused with the warmth resulting from good insulation.

Clothing and warmth

The body temperature regulation system responds to the total clothing insulation it 'feels'. The insulation of various clothing items compared to a lightweight cotton shirt material is shown in the table below. The effective insulation at any point is not just the sum of the insulation of individual clothing layers. Research has shown that for an average man wearing a business suit, the measured insulation of the clothing is approximately 17% of the total insulation surrounding him when he is at rest. The other 83% is made up of air trapped between garments and between skin and underwear, and air at the outer surface of the clothing, called the 'boundary layer'.

Table 3: Typical clothing insulation

Item	Insulation relative to cotton shirting
Cotton shirting	1
Lightweight worsted suiting	2
Medium weight suiting	6
Light overcoat	8
Heavyweight suiting	9
Light wool pullover	10
Boundary air layer	15
Velour overcoat	20
Heavy wool pullover	20
Jacket padding	20
Pile jacket	45

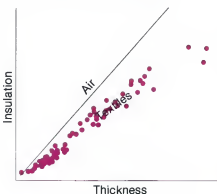
In loose-fitting clothing, body movement causes heat to be lost by what is known as 'bellows ventilation', or air circulation

by pumping. Back and forth movement of the clothing relative to the skin causes air to flow along underneath the garment, picking up heat as it passes the skin and carrying it out through openings at the neck, sleeves and so on. In these conditions, the measured insulation of the clothing may bear little relation to the apparent insulation.

To use the example of the man in a business suit again, when his activity increases from resting to walking, bellows ventilation reduces his total insulation so that the insulation of his suit now makes up 25% of the total. The influence of the insulation of trapped air layers decreases as the clothing thickness is increased to cope with colder conditions, and measured clothing insulation may reach 80-90% with Arctic clothing systems.

Increasing wind speed changes the insulation of clothing in a number of ways, of which the most significant is the increase in heat loss by convection from the clothing surface. It also reduces the thickness of the boundary air layer and thus decreases the total resistance of the clothing. In addition, an outer garment which is permeable to air will allow cold

Figure 2: Textiles and insulation



outside air to be forced into the clothing on the windward side, and warm air from within the clothing to pass out through the opposite side, reducing the effective insulation of the clothing. Forced air flow can be avoided by wearing outer garments which are very tightly woven. They should not be completely impermeable, as this blocks the passage of evaporated sweat. A good fit at openings such as cuffs, neck and waist will also reduce wind penetration.

The contribution of air and fibre to thermal insulation in textiles is shown in Figure 2. A still air layer has an insulation shown by the upper line. As the thickness of the air layer increases, so does the insulation. The points plotted on the graph represent the measured resistance of typical apparel textiles made from a wide range of fibre types. Put simply, the insulation of the air layer at any thickness has been reduced by the introduction of fibre. The points all lie on or near a straight line, irrespective of the fibre they are made from, showing that thickness has a far greater influence on insulation than fibre type.

Good insulation is produced from fibres which can be made into thick, lightweight, flexible fabrics or fillings which restrict air-circulation and retain their shape and thickness. Fibre thermal properties are of secondary importance.

Thermal insulation is generally measured in apparatus which sets up a constant temperature difference through the textile. In practice, conditions are rarely constant, and laboratory measurements of this type are only a guide to the way in which products perform in use. The air inside fabric may move under the action of outside wind pressure or during activity, reducing the insulation of the garment.

Fibres and insulation

Given the relatively minor role of fibres in the insulation of a product, how do developments in fibre technology change the picture? Going back to Figure 1, it is clear that it is not possible to increase the insulation of a given thickness of material beyond that of an equivalent thickness of air. Properties which can vary between products include the thermal conductivity, reflective properties, diameter of the fibres from which it is made, and the amount of fibre in the material.

The thermal conductivities of textile fibres are several times greater than the conductivity of air and, with the possible exception of cotton, are all very similar. Since air makes up most of the structure anyway, identical products made up in different fibres will have very similar thermal properties. Choosing a product made from a fibre with low conductivity is not sufficient to ensure good insulation.

Woven or knitted structures very rarely consist of less than 10% fibre. Too little fibre detracts from essential textile

properties, particularly shape and size retention. This is not a problem with filling materials which are normally stitched inside a woven cover and may contain as little as 2% or 3% fibre. However, reducing the proportion of fibre below about 5% leads to an increase in heat flow by infra-red radiation. This mode of heat flow also depends on the potential of the fibre surface to absorb radiation. Infra-red absorption is very high for fibres.

Infra-red radiation decreases with decreasing fibre diameter. The great advantages of down as an insulator are its ability to return to its original volume after being stored in a compressed state, and the fineness of its structure. Down has a quill or stem with a diameter of about 20 micrometres, and protruding from this are a great number of fine, fibre-like barbules about seven micrometres in diameter. The average diameter is much lower than most apparel fibres.

One recent innovation in outdoor insulation is hollow fibres. These are claimed to trap additional air in the core, and so give better insulation. The typical applications for these fibres are low-bulk materials such as filling for sleeping bags and jackets, where the fibre often makes up less than 5% of the total volume of the product. Replacing part of the fibre with air reduces the proportion of conduction through the fibres, but with so little fibre present anyway, the improvement in insulation is marginal.

In the last few years there has been a growing promotion of products intended for warmth using the catch-word 'thermal'. The term was first used many years ago for the promotion of PVC, sometimes called chlorofibre, and has since been taken up by other fibre manufacturers. A considerable mystique was built around chlorofibres, based on claims of superior warmth, zero moisture absorption and a few vague therapeutic properties as well. Whilst this was an original and very successful marketing approach, it is now generally recognized that fibres play a secondary role in warmth, and to regard any fibre as superior to all others is not justified.

In discussing marginal differences between products or fibres, we should not lose sight of the fact that very small differences in thickness will achieve the same effect as substantial changes in fibre or material properties. Further, some

materials undergo significant changes in thickness resulting from repeated cycles of wear and cleaning, and may ultimately not perform as well as a product with apparently similar or even inferior properties when new.

Moisture and insulation in fibres

We are all familiar with the hazards of chill from wet clothing. This comes about largely because the air trapped between the fibres in the clothing is replaced by

taken up in the clothing from sweat or rain penetration, the insulating properties of hygroscopic fibres will decrease slightly. With non-absorbing fibres, this moisture is present in the fabric structure as liquid, and displaces some of the air, so that the insulation of the garment is decreased substantially.

The effect of hygroscopic fibres on warmth is also apparent when conditions are changing, as when passing from a warm, dry room into a cold, moist outdoor atmosphere. During this transition there is a slight warming of the garment, which behaves as a buffer against the change in air temperature. Hygroscopic fibres also have the capacity to buffer changes in moisture within the clothing.

The absorption of moisture causes fibres to swell in diameter. There is a misunderstanding that this swelling closes off the air spaces in the fabric and inhibits the passage of moisture evaporating from the skin. However the change in diameter of the wool fibre, for example, is about 16% from bone dry to saturated, corresponding to a fibre volume increase of about 35%. In underwear or normal apparel, this increase is not enough to displace more than a small proportion of the air from the fabric, and the change in moisture loss is marginal.

This property is used to advantage in a rain-resistant product known as cotton ventile, which is an extremely densely woven fabric with little space between fibres. When exposed to water, the cotton fibres swell and decrease the size of the pores, resisting the passage of liquid water, but still allowing the fabric to breathe.

Given a few basic facts about the warmth of textiles, it is not difficult to apply common sense and evaluate the potential performance of different products. Factors which need to be considered in choosing clothing for warmth are thickness and amount of body coverage, weight, the fit, both around the body and at the wrists, neck, waist and so on, freedom of body movement, and permeability of the outer surface. Most of these factors are the result of careful textile manufacturing processes, and it is not possible to nominate a single fibre type as superior in all respects. Each has advantages and disadvantages. ■

This article explains how clothing insulates. Future articles will discuss the role of clothing in the dispersion of perspiration.

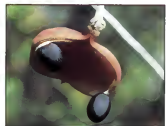


water. Table 2 shows that water has 33 times greater thermal conductivity than air, and three to four times that of textile fibres. Hence the clothing becomes a good conductor, and loses its insulating capability. If completely saturated, the garment may also cling to the skin or other layers of clothing, and take away the insulation of the air normally held between garments or against the skin.

Some fibres absorb moisture into their molecular structure, and in the process give off heat. When the moisture is released, heat is taken up. This property, known as 'hygroscopicity', is characteristic of natural fibres such as wool and cotton. Wool can absorb up to 35% of its dry weight in water before the fabric appears wet. The thermal conductivity of the fibre changes with the amount of water absorbed, and so in situations where small amounts of moisture are



THE TOP END BY KAYAK



A remarkable
Arnhem Land
sea kayak
odyssey, by
John Boardman

● THE COAST AND ISLANDS OF TROPICAL Australia are a wonderland for the sea kayaker. Off the north-east corner of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory is a long, narrow chain of continental islands, the Wessels and Cunningham groups. Between two of the islands in this archipelago is a surprisingly straight, rocky channel only 40–60 metres in width and known as Cugari Rip, or Hole in the

Wall. The three to four metre tides on the eastern side of these islands do not necessarily coincide with tides of up to six or seven metres on the other. The resulting tidal surges have given Cugari Rip a notorious reputation, and we were

From top: ready for the voyage (note the furled sail behind the paddler), Yolngu youngster hunting fish, and the edible seed of the sterculia or peanut tree. All photos Kevin Mackay



advised to use extreme caution if we intended using this passage.

Low early morning light accentuated the colours of the high striking cliffs we paddled below on the way to the Hole in the Wall. As we rounded the last headland



Top, even in a relatively calm sea a kayak and paddler seem to be swallowed by the rise and fall of the waves. **Above**, Garrurru prepares to remove the belly shell of a large turtle he speared. **Right**, putting the finishing touches to a bark painting.

the sea became rougher and more confused. From a kayak the horizon is very short, and in choppy seas a companion or landmarks, while quite close, can disappear, obscured by waves. So for some time it was impossible to see any break in the coastline and the opening to Hole in the Wall was, according to the map and compass taped to the deck of the kayak, 'somewhere over there'.

After the neck craning and head twisting which is a necessary part of sea kayak navigation in these conditions, the opening to Hole in the Wall became visible—so did the boil that seemed to guard the



entrance and what appeared to be calm, clear water beyond.

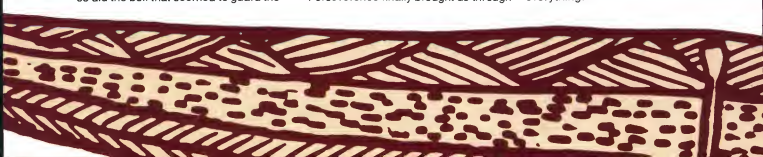
Boils are a phenomenon in the sea that a kayakist would prefer to see well to port, starboard or astern—waves without any particular direction or logic, steep-sided peaks of water which seem to erupt from the sea then drop just as quickly away into hollows. Tossed haphazardly, unable to anticipate, the natural reaction is to paddle like crazy to get through and out of it as soon as possible, which we did.

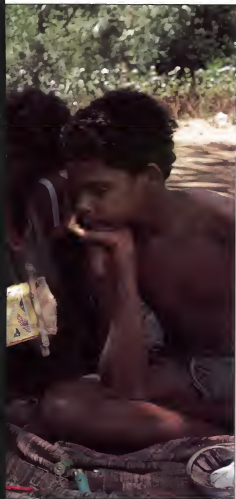
The boil ended abruptly, almost along a straight line, but the calm beyond was, in fact, a rapidly moving sheet of water, the tidal surge coming through the Hole in the Wall. With its nose into the surge and its rear still in the boil, the kayak began ferry-gliding towards the rocks and disaster on the right. A hard-left rudder finally and thankfully brought the craft across into a back eddy. We used the back eddies for occasional rest and easy progress wherever possible. Trying to paddle against the main current was out of the question and even towards the edge of the channel continuous power stroking and fine rudder control often brought only slow, laborious progress.

Perseverance finally brought us through

Hole in the Wall and into a calm, sandy bay where we beached at a likely campsite. After lightening the kayaks of our water and some camping gear they were, as usual, carried beyond high water mark. We set up camp in a shady clump of trees behind the beach dunes, made ourselves comfortable through the heat of the afternoon, cooked and ate a large hearty meal, chatted around the campfire and slept soundly.

On most of our paddling days we did not experience the extreme conditions and excitement of our journey to and through Hole in the Wall. For much of the ten weeks spent on the trip the weather and seas were calm and favourable. Occasionally we were able to hoist our simple but effective square-rigged sails, sit back and take in the passing scenery. The sails demounted easily, and were folded and stowed on the deck behind the cockpit. A rudder on the sea kayak eliminated the need for correcting strokes, allowing the paddler to settle into a steady, uniform rhythm. The monotonous regularity of this physical activity freed the mind for the perusal and contemplation of surroundings, life, the universe and everything.





This reverie was occasionally interrupted by a sudden bump against the rear of the kayak. Quickly twisting round, the dark shape of a shark could often be glimpsed, lazily trailing behind. Then the paddler would immediately change to an ungainly and unorthodox position, with hands in the middle of the double-bladed paddle, elbows raised, eyes sharpened and head swivelling. We guessed that perhaps the sharks were taking a half-hearted taste of the rudder as it flashed through the water, then following briefly to check out this strange, unpalatable newcomer. We also had sharks swim up to the side of the kayak, almost bump it with their noses, then turn and disappear in a violent swirl of water. Few sharks are known to take humans and we have not heard of an attack on a paddler while in a kayak.

Tropical Australia has another feared and often misunderstood resident, the salt-water crocodile. Our trip was timed to lie outside the mating and nesting seasons when these reptiles become more territorial and aggressive. Some delightful beaches were passed by when a suitable campsite could not be found at a 'safe' distance from creek mouths,

mangroves or lagoons. One beautiful small bay we did not camp at had a school of sharks just offshore and an ominous salt-water lagoon lying behind the beach dunes.

Our craft, single-person Rosco sea kayaks, were spacious and very comfortable in the sea. Designed for island and coastal touring, their shallow draught allowed maximum access to such areas by sea, through surf, over coral and rock platforms, shallow bays and beaches, and up rivers and mangrove creeks. The

available in Australia. Even quickly and roughly constructed lures of hooks and coloured plastic ribbon were effective. On one occasion, having hooked and played a strong and wily trevally around and through rocky snags, what was to be our lunch was lying beaten a metre below the ledge I was standing on. A black-tipped reef shark sped from the depths, its head burst from the water at my feet with the trevally thrashing in its jaws, then was gone, leaving me slack-jawed and shaken. But despite cut lines, straightened hooks

North-east Arnhem Land



sea kayaks were particularly suited to travelling in wilderness areas, since they were silent, self-propelled and self-contained life support systems. Some of the islands we camped on had almost no introduced flora or fauna: finding them as they may have been before the European colonization of Australia, we were happy to be able to limit our environmental impact to an absolute minimum.

Paddling an average of once every three days also gave us ample opportunity for walks through the surrounding country and for some of the most exciting fishing

and lost lures, we often enjoyed such delights as coral trout still flapping in the frying pan.

Every outing from camp promised the discovery of a new wildflower, as much of the vegetation came into bloom during our ten weeks in the area. Up on the headlands, which seem bare from a distance, the shrubs growing prostrate in response to shearing winds presented a patchwork quilt of colours as pleasurable to walk through as any landscaped rock-garden.

As well as the wildflowers amongst the

grasses, herbs, shrubs and trees of the foreshore dunes, we identified and were shown many edible plants and were able to supplement our meals with various seeds, shoots, roots, leaves, beans and fruit.

As we were able to carry enough water for two weeks at most, our supply needed to be replenished regularly. As well as sources we were directed to by locals, we came to recognize plants which are good indicators of the proximity of fresh water. Exploring every dry creek bed encountered, we dug holes in likely places

and visited the same beaches for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years by a method similar to ours and without the benefits of twentieth century technology was both uplifting and humbling.

Arnhem Land and the adjacent islands are recognized as Aboriginal land. As part of our early preparation we sent cassette tapes to the Northern Land Council and various local land councils and traditional land owners, whereby we introduced ourselves and asked permission to visit their part of the country. Through the outstation movement in the Northern

territory, Aboriginal people are returning to their tribal lands and traditional ways of life and culture. By these and other means they are exercising some control over the management and future of their land. The name for the people in the area we travelled through is Yolngu. Whenever Yolngu were encountered at outstations along the way we found they usually knew we were coming and were always friendly and keen to explain their way of life and share their knowledge of the land. Through their eyes we saw ourselves surrounded by plants that were edible or used in making everyday implements like spears, string and baskets.

When a turtle was speared we were keen to witness its preparation and try this new culinary experience. After the killing, decapitating and gutting, certain intestines were washed in the sea. The turtle was stood up on its tail and the cleaned intestines were returned, along with heated rocks from a fire and certain leaves for flavouring. The neck cavity was stuffed with grass and the body placed over the fire for about 20 minutes, then removed and laid on its back. As we chewed on the intestines the belly shell was cut away and the flesh butchered with a knife. Drinking the rich and flavoursome soup of blood and juices collected in the bottom of the shell is a delight I would happily repeat any time.

One of the group at the last outstation we visited was Yalkarriwuy. As a lawman and artist he produces special implements of ceremonial and ritual significance. Bark painting is a traditional art of which

Aborigines are justifiably proud. We tagged along as Yalkarriwuy selected and cut away a suitable section of bark from the trunk of a stringy bark and placed it outside-down on a fire. The bark was taken from the fire, flattened under foot and the burnt bark scraped away. Stripped sticks and bush string were used to clamp the ends of the bark, keeping it flat. As we walked back to camp Yalkarriwuy picked an orchid. Its roots and stems were



One of the few beaches, and therefore campsites, the party found among the high cliffs and headlands of the windward side of the Wessel Islands. **Right**, a canavalia flower. The beans of this beach vine are poisonous if eaten raw, but with boiling become edible and were added to many of the party's meals.

then returned to gather the settled water. Though sometimes discoloured, the water was usually quite palatable and always welcome.

A stroll along the beach often turned up surprises: finding a weathered woomera or spear-thrower discarded some time in the past by an Aboriginal hunter, a bleached section of whale skeleton jutting metres out of an established dune, or on the way back to camp a crocodile track across the beach which was not there on the walk out. Once we found the remains of a dug-out canoe carved from a single log with housings for outriggers and a mast. The style conformed to that of the Macassans from Sulawesi who hunted trepang and traded throughout the area during the wet season. To find evidence that others had travelled the same seas

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pounded and rubbed into the bark in preparation for painting. Colour rocks of yellow, red, orange, black and white were dipped into a mixture of orchid sap and water and rubbed on to a rock palette. As we sat in the shade of a tree a bark painting of rich earthy colours emerged from Yalkarriwuy's labours. It was to be a present for a relative who was soon to visit the area.

In the short time spent with the Yolngu we enjoyed sitting around camp fires hearing their stories and occasionally telling our own, listening to their songs and watching their dances. We are indebted to the Yolngu and their land for making our trip the fantastic experience it was. ■



TAKE ME TO THE PILOT

A hot walk to this majestic peak in southern NSW, with *Dave Jones*

● 'WHY DON'T WE GO FOR A WALK AFTER Christmas?' someone said. 'Great idea,' I thought. Only, problem was, where? Lorraine said she had never been to the Pilot. I said I thought a stroll along the Snowy River might be pleasant. Jenny, Ann and Libby decided to remain neutral. So, in the true spirit of consensus, we decided not to make a decision until we



Territorial creatures, bumblebees. (On Nine Mile Pinch.) Right: The hordes' camped on Tin Mine Creek. All photos Lorraine Smith

got there. 'There!' turned out to be the banks of the Snowy, just downstream from its confluence with the Jacobs River.

The first afternoon was spent reclining either in or beside the Snowy recovering from the inevitable hassle of Barking Day traffic. Comments like 'it will take dynamite



to get me away from here' and 'there's always next time' floated around the group. The dynamite was Lorraine, who definitely had her heart set on the Pilot. Maps were pulled out and poried over, possibilities discussed and evaluated. In the end it narrowed down to our eventual route: up the Nine Mile Fire Track to the Ingeegooddee River, follow it till we got to the Tin Mine Hut's then south again to the Tin Mine Hut's then south again to the then round to Stockwhip Hill and back via the Charcoal Range. Simple!

Hoping to beat the heat, we made an early start and drove from our campsite to the Pinch River, following the road beside the river until it started to climb.

After parking the car it was on with the packs and off up the Nine Mile. When I say up, I mean up! Fortunately the sun was hidden behind some merciful clouds or we may have been forced to mulch and flee to the river, purely for medical reasons of course—dangerous things, heatstroke and dehydration. One of our major worries was the weight of flies we were carrying. There was concern in the party that they may prove to be the final straw that broke the camel's back. With sweat pouring liberally from every gland, we staggered upward, ever upward. While indulging in one of our regular exhaustion breaks, we were overtaken by two horsemen who informed us that they had taken a quarter

of our time to get to our present height, and they were not sweating at all. It is a good thing it is illegal to kill animals in National Parks or we may have succumbed to the temptation of mugging them and indulging in some good old-fashioned horse stealing. The other problem was that there were five of us, but only two horses. I do not think they realized how lucky they were!

We staggered on upwards, muttering and cursing in true bushwalking fashion. The only things keeping us going were the observation that these things always seem much better when you look back on them

actually see any.

An early start next morning was rewarded by the sight of a mob of brumbies crossing the open plain in front of us. Wandering along beside the river proved to be an attractive alternative to the jeep track. Brumby tracks always appeared at the right time so we did not have to walk through too much of the snake-infested tussock grass. Flocks of wood ducks were quite common, feeding on the river flats. We strolled along the Ingeegoodbee to the track junction at Tin Mine Huts, whereupon we turned west to the Tin Mine Creek valley. A campsite was selected

contrasted starkly with the eucalypts around them.

All too soon it was time to head back to our campsite. We set off over Little Pilot and down the ridge to our tents. On the way we saw several groups of brumbies, all looking in superb condition.

As we got back to the bridge on Tin Mine Creek we were greeted by the horrible sight of a tent city that had sprung up in our absence. A party of 17 people, with what seemed like nearly as many tents, had decided to camp almost in the creek, straddling the track and pitching tents right on a side track. As we passed we noticed several people standing in or beside the creek, soaping up for a good wash! Maybe it is time *Wild* ran some articles on low-impact bushwalking and bush etiquette. We hurried on to our campsite and another evening of mosquitoes and March flies. Having heard the horde over the hill discussing a trip to Tin Mine Falls the next day, we decided to give them a miss. We had learned from several sources that it is nearly impossible to get a decent view of the falls and did not relish the thought of seeing the swathe of destruction that a group that size would probably leave behind in the scrub. Instead we headed off up the Cascade Track to where the Tin Mine Fire Track branches off, following it towards Stockwhip Hill. Lorraine and I were stupid enough to take a dip in the headwaters of the Pinch River. It may have been warm out but it sure was



From left, 'domestic chores' in camp on Tin Mine Creek, the remnants of Tin Mine Huts, on top of the Pilot after a hot climb, and Cowombat Flat and the Cobberas from the Pilot.

and the fact that to quit now would be a waste of the sweat and effort expended so far. Of course the sun decided to come out for the last 200 vertical metres. It was kind of the sun to wait that long. We decided to stagger on to the river for lunch.

The Ingeegoodbee was a pleasant surprise. Despite the rather cold water we all had a dip to cool off. Lunch-time conversation revolved around aching bodies, the steepness of the Nine Mile (we climbed over 900 metres in about four and a half kilometres), how strange it was to walk up 900 metres to a river, and the cause of the huge piles of horse manure we kept coming across. We decided that either the brumbies had very regular bowel habits or the brumby stallions had a lot of territorial disputes. Either way, there sure were some huge piles of manure. The afternoon was spent strolling along beside the Ingeegoodbee until we thought it a good idea to camp. That night we heard some brumbies go past but, despite our best efforts, we did not

downstream from the bridge and the night spent swatting mosquitoes. We held a 60-second 'kill-a-thon' and managed to kill about a dozen mosquitoes each! It was a case of put on all your clothing and bathe in repellent. The persistent little devils kept trying to bite us through our clothes. The March flies decided to join in to provide a bit of variety, allowing us to alternate between swatting mosquitoes and smearing March flies on various parts of our bodies.

Next morning it was on with the day packs and off to the Pilot. We followed the Cowombat Fire Track until we crossed the creek flowing out of the saddle between the Pilot and Little Pilot. Climbing up next to the creek eventually brought us out on the summit of the Pilot. We joined the four people who had beaten us to the cairn and enjoyed a magnificent panorama while we ate lunch. The view from the Pilot was stunning. To the north, the Ramshead Range dominated the skyline, the last snow drifts starkly white against the ridges. To the south the Cobberas looked superb. The Victorian Alps showed clearly in the south-west, the patches of snow on Mts Bogong and Nelse clearly visible. The cypress forests of the Snowy River valley



cold in! A campsite was chosen at the last reliable water before Stockwhip Hill, as we anticipated a long dry walk to a waterless camp the next day.

Next morning it was a case of fill up every water container we had and stagger off along the track. We climbed round Stockwhip Hill and headed down to the Charcoal Range Fire Track. This track heads off in the saddle as marked on the Central Mapping Authority 1:50,000 *Thredbo* sheet, and not as marked on the 1:100,000 *Jacobs River* sheet. The track soon deteriorates (or perhaps I should say improves) into a brumby pad. As we wandered along the ridge Lorraine, who was leading the way, nearly walked into an emu coming the other way. We are not sure who got the bigger fright! By this time the clouds had descended and we were

walking along in a light mist. Through the mist we saw a mob of brumbies, all greys. They were an eerie sight as they galloped off into the scrub.

We continued along this beautiful ridge, regularly seeing small groups of brumbies. During one of our regular breaks Libby stunned us all by saying that she had a scorpion in her pack harness! Sure enough, there was a scorpion about eight centimetres long, happily roaming around behind her pack's lumbar pad. Fortunately the locals were friendly or she might have received a nasty sting. The scorpion seemed quite indignant when we made it get out and walk. And I thought you only had to empty your boots out in the morning in B-grade English desert films!

We eventually reached our planned camping spot, Charcoal Gap, only to find it was dreadful. After the lovely saddles we had just passed through it felt claustrophobic and most uninviting. There was nothing for it but to press on. We continued to Connors Gap where it was a bit

richness of the sound was quite incredible.

As we headed down, the track just kept getting steeper and steeper. In the end we had to walk down sideways. As we dropped towards the river the change in vegetation was most interesting. At the top it is a fairly moist forest of tall gums, but by the bottom it is a very dry forest of scraggly eucalypts and cypress. By the time we reached the river we were dying for a swim but had to wait till we could find a way through the dreaded blackberries. Eventually we found a superb spot for lunch beside the river on a huge flat rock, where we could spread out to relax and ease our aching feet. While we were reclining on the river bank, a pair of Lorraine's socks made a determined and successful bid for freedom. If anyone finds a new pair of Explorer socks in either the Pinch or Snowy Rivers, they belong to Lorraine. After lunch we managed to convince our weary feet to carry us the last few kilometres to the car. By following the brumby pads along the river we avoided the nasty little climb and drop that the jeep track sneaks in just before it finishes.

Once back at the car there was nothing for it but to return to our spot on the Snowy for a last day of rest and relaxation before returning to Melbourne. It was hell! Nothing to do but lounge around in the sun and

swim in the river. Somehow we managed to survive. On our last night nature decided to put on a free show, a magnificent electrical storm. The thunder was deafening and the lightning blinding. We were very glad to be off the ridge and away from



the danger zone. A treed ridge-top is no place to be on a night like that. In the morning we had to pack up and head back to Melbourne to get ready for work. Still, life was not meant to be all fun... W

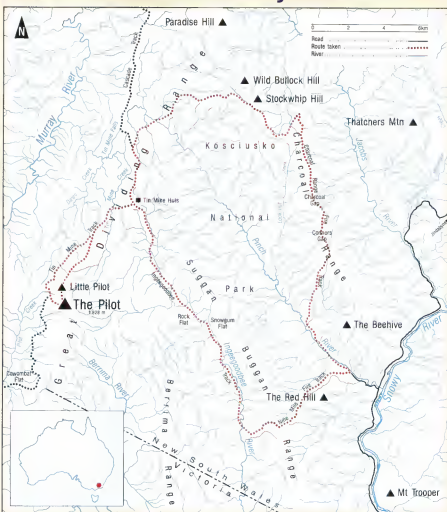
Dave Jones (see Contributors in Wild no 6) has worked in specialist outdoor shops for many years. A keen cross country skier and bushwalker, he has written a number of Wild Gear Surveys.



more pleasant, though not quite up to our usual standards. Having lugged vast quantities of water all day we were too tired to go look for any, so it was just as well we had carried the stuff! Well, that was how I justified it to myself anyway. I figured I had carried about 13 litres. Of course, it rained that night! In the morning we still had enough water left to have a bath!

After emptying out our excess water in the morning we set off along the Charcoal Range once more, looking at the map and wondering if the descent could really be as steep as it looked on the map. I think it was steeper. Fortunately it was misty at the ridge-top so we could not see where we had to go. As we started to drop off the range we walked through a patch of forest filled with the sound of lyrebirds. The males were going berserk, filling the bush with an amazing medley of bird calls. Each bird was trying to outdo his rivals. The

The Pilot from the Snowy River



A full-page photograph of a skier in a blue shirt, black pants, red gaiters, and a yellow helmet, skiing down a steep, snow-covered mountain slope. The skier is using two ski poles and is in a dynamic, forward-leaning position. The background shows a vast, snowy mountain landscape with some dark, rocky outcrops visible in the upper left.

Wild Ski Touring

Northern
India is
'Telemark
territory'
without
equal, says
*Glenn
Tempest*

HIMALAYAN SKI TOUR

● **KNOWN AS THE PASS OF THE BONES**, Rhotang, at an altitude of 3,915 metres, is open only for the four months from July to October. For the rest of the year Rhotang Pass is deep in snow and scoured by winds that can reach a staggering 180 kilometres an hour.

It was April, spring in the Kulu valley, the fabled valley of the gods. Rhotang Pass was still officially closed, although down among the apple blossoms the village of Manali baked in the warmth of the sun. The Beas River, which rushes through the village, was rising daily as the result of the spring thaw. Huw and I had already spent some time climbing and skiing in the area and were fit and well acclimatized. Before we had left Australia we had talked about the possibility of skiing a circuit that would take us out of the Kulu valley, over Rhotang Pass and into Lahaul. We would return to Manali by crossing the spectacular Hampta Pass

post is manned throughout the winter and is controlled by the Indian Mountaineering Federation to look after travellers crossing this notorious pass. The nearby buildings were still covered by snow and it did not take much imagination to visualize how bleak this place must be in the depths of winter. Huw and I were given our choice of bunks. We had barely got our sleeping bags out before a meal was dished up for us. Red-hot curried mutton (with fleece), chappati and chai. It was a battle of hunger versus burnt lips, runny noses and spitting out bits of bone mixed with unidentifiable squirming matter. Typ-

strode off into the gale leaving Huw and I feeling slightly overdressed and a bit humiliated. It was obvious we could not back out now. To my horror, breakfast then turned out to be the previous night's reheated 'extravaganza' with an extra cup of curry powder thrown in to give it a new start to the day. I skied off after Huw feeling as if my insides had been scoured out with a toilet brush.

After an hour or so the wind dropped. Snow flurries continued to chase each other amongst the wind scoops but at least we did not have to yell at one another to make ourselves heard. The way be-

Manali Region

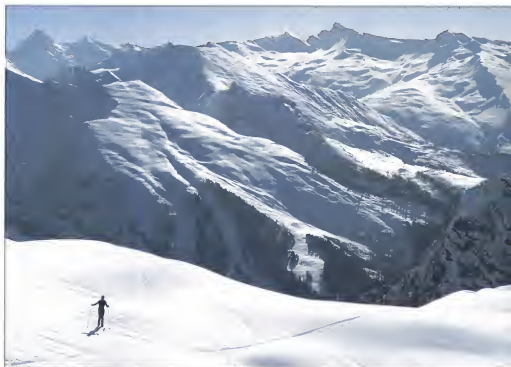


(4,300 metres). Although not far in terms of distance, the trip would provide us with a solid week of magnificent skiing, we hoped. With only 10 or 12 days left in India, we hoped this trip would provide a good ending to an already successful ski holiday.

We left the tiny village of Pulchurn and sweated our way up the lower valley overloaded with chocolate and little else. It became bitterly cold as soon as we entered the shadow and passed under hazardous ice curtains draped across the overhanging cliffs.

We reached the snow line late in the afternoon. An icy crust had already developed and we took turns in kicking steps up the slope. Occasionally we could see the buried outlines of an ancient path with its ice-covered stone walls.

Just before dark a cold wind blew up and we were glad to reach the official rescue post at Mhuri. Ironically the local translation of Mhuri is death. It was named after the greater part of a Sikh army perished here a couple of centuries ago. The



Range upon range of virgin snow; looking towards the Kulu valley from Beaskund. **Left**, Huw Kingston skiing on Hampta Pass. All photos Glenn Tempest

ically Huw loved it, going back for two more helpings and then licking my plate clean after his own! I would have been a lot happier with beer and chips.

I dozed during the night and could feel the building moving slightly in the wind which raged outside. Next morning the wind gusts were even stronger. I curled up in my sleeping bag confident of a 'rest' day. Suddenly the door flew open and we were besieged by an army of locals crowding into the room and warming themselves around the tandoori oven. Mohar Singh, the post physician, leaned out of his bunk and smilingly informed us that 61 people were to attempt the crossing from this side and six from the other. Radio contact with the other side of the pass ensured that the correct numbers of travellers were accounted for at the end of each day.

Huw and I stared at each other in disbelief. The wind was blowing at gale force and, even disregarding the subzero temperatures, the wind was strong enough to knock a person over. By 7.30 am the 61 men, women and children, wrapped in shawls and clad in cheap gumboots,

came increasingly steep and icy and it was necessary to carry our ice axes to prevent taking a long painful slide down the slope. My thoughts went out to the locals, who do not have such hi-tech equipment. For them a stout stick seems adequate.

Huw peered down the steep slope that disappeared over a cliff, and shook his head.

'I don't care what they carry,' he mumbled, 'but I wouldn't be up here without an ice axe'. Then, as an afterthought; 'I'd also be wearing my crampons if I'd brought them!'

By the time we reached the top of the pass the wind had died. It was completely still. Before us lay Lahaul. Here the geography of the land changed dramatically. Barren valleys, devoid of vegetation, seemed to highlight the rugged mountains rising into the cold clear Himalayan air. Rarely do these valleys see the rains that drench the forested valleys to the south.

Almost 1,000 metres below us the Chandra River sparkled, tumbling its way between high snow walls and under snow bridges on its long journey to join the Indus River.

A short steep rocky gully brought us out

on to a magnificent snow slope. With some initial hesitation we pushed off, carving long graceful turns despite the weight of our packs. The snow was powdery on a firm base, and allowed us to ski steep sections that normally we would not have



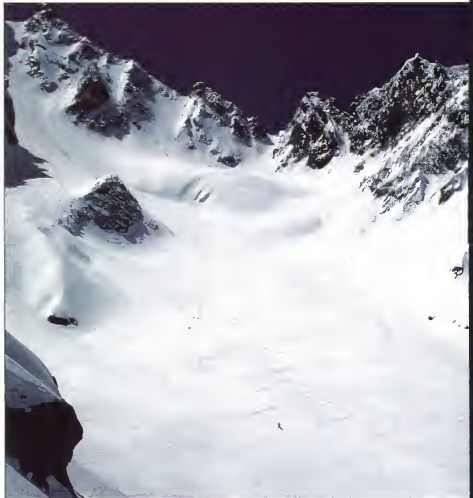
'That's it, the racing tuck—now all you need is some snow and a pair of skis.' **Right**, telemark skiing the magnificent powder runs near Hampta Pass. **Far right**, camp on the Chandra River, Lahaul.

attempted. The quality of the snow did not deter us from practising the occasional 'face-plant stop' however. This well-known technique was something that Huw and I had perfected over the last five weeks! We were tired but elated by the time we reached the river. The only mishap was when Huw broke his pole. As we were not carrying a spare, we repaired it with one of the alloy tent pegs. By bending it into shape with an ice axe it fitted perfectly over the break. Taped up, it lasted the rest of the trip. Huw claimed it was stronger than the unbroken pole.

The moment the sun disappeared from view the temperature plunged to almost -15°C . Fingers stuck to metal objects and we were forced to cook from our sleeping bags. It was a clear starry night and a full moon bathed the valley in an eerie silver glow.

The only movement in the still cold air were the cats whose footprints we discovered in the morning, close to the tent. We waited until the sun hit the tent before venturing out of the warmth of our bags. In a remarkable contrast to only an hour before, it soon became overpoweringly hot.

Skiing on up the banks of the Chandra, it often became necessary to cross enormous piles of avalanche debris, so large that they often covered the whole valley floor, hiding the river from view. Using these and other bridges of snow, we crossed and recrossed the river whilst choosing the easiest route. Soon the valley narrowed, enclosing us between loose rock walls that towered many hun-



dreds of metres above our heads. We realized how vulnerable we were when occasional bits of rock and ice came away high on the face and whistled down to land in the snow close to us. I followed Huw's example and hurried on through to safer ground.

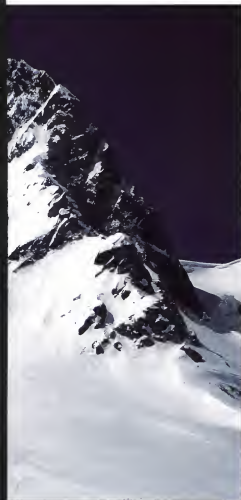
We skied into the deserted village of Chattru two hours before the sun set. Few of the roof-tops were visible, most were still buried beneath the snow. A lone silver-birch tree stood clear of the drifts and was the only sign of any vegetation. An icicle-covered suspension bridge crossing the river was buckled and twisted under the weight of deep snow. In the last hours before dark we skied on up the valley trying to locate a way up to Hampta Pass. I had a few doubts about finding the pass, particularly when Huw produced a crumpled piece of paper he called the map and supplemented it with his Southern hemisphere compass. The fact that the map had no compass bearings, contours, heights or gridlines did not seem to worry him. Just as it was almost dark we agreed on the most likely-looking gap that seemed a lot less formidable than any of the others. It was an icy ski back to Chattru.

Next morning we had a short magic ski run down to the river. Crossing a snow bridge we made our way up the other side and into an impressive narrow gap that we hoped would be Hampta Pass. Occasionally the stream that ran beneath the snow under our skis would make an appear-

ance, its fresh clear water relieving the burning in our throats. We drank greedily, not knowing if the stream would reappear again.

We were now skiing up a deep narrow high-walled snow tunnel that twisted and turned as it gradually climbed. It reminded me of an oversized bob-sled course. Finally we reached its top and were surprised to find an astonishingly large valley confronting us. An abundance of weird contorted rock towers gave the place a peculiar gothic feel. At the head of the valley stood Indrasan (6,221 metres). Its superb north face reared up over 2,000 metres above us. A steep narrow couloir on our right led up to Hampta Pass at 4,300 metres. Looking at the gap I thought I could make out a series of footsteps kicked into the snow. At this time of year a crossing by locals is unlikely, and it was with some doubt that I skied on. Soon I could make out some figures and as I got closer it became obvious that it was a family. It was an unusual group that sat down on spun woollen shawls in the snow. The family were on their way to Spitti, a region to the north and out of bounds to foreigners. It would take them another ten days of arduous snow plodding with two high passes to cross on the way.

Once again I was humbled by the crude clothing and meagre rations that these people possessed. I felt embarrassed by our equipment. Sharing chai and biscuits, we sat beneath Indrasan's north face



which loomed up into a black-blue sky.

We left the family making their way slowly down the valley whilst we sweated up the final steep snow couloir of Hampta Pass. We reached the top a few hours before sunset and took the opportunity to ski some of the outstanding snow slopes that swept up 1,000 metres above our tent site.

Magnificent powder conditions gave us the chance to improve our Telemark turns. One run in particular descended a gradually steepening dome that ended abruptly in a 500 metre vertical rock face. Huw mentioned something about it being a good place to learn how to stop. It was a memorable evening.

Next day was spent skiing the most prominent run in the area. A convex slope gradually steepening to a narrow gully led to an impressive summit at about 5,200 metres. The long plod up to the top of the slope was more than worth the effort. We were rewarded with a ski run that left us weak kneed and breathless by the time we reached the bottom. Back up again, and this time it was down a steeper and more demanding run requiring a lot of very aggressive Telemarking to stay in control. After this, even the tiring effects of the altitude did not stop our enthusiasm to head back up for more exhilarating runs.

We left Hampta Pass in a snow storm that fortunately passed over during the day. Initially the skiing was quite difficult. Long slopes were pocketed with horrible

wind scoops that gave the distinct feeling of skiing over multiple speed-humps. The effect was much the same, and speed was kept to a bare minimum. Later the snow softened and with more conventional technique we continued gliding down the valley for the next four or five kilometres.

The valley walls narrowed to a final steep cataract of water that twisted and turned its way noisily between precarious boulders and walls of ice. Here we side-stepped down into its main breach finally having to remove skis, fix them to our packs and scramble across avalanche debris into the bottom. The final run down

enough for us both to sleep on. Rounding a corner on the track we disturbed a forest leopard standing barely a few metres away. Frozen in its tracks for a brief moment, it then leapt up into the undergrowth and quickly disappeared from sight.

When it seemed that we were destined to an all-night sitting marathon on the narrow path, keeping each other awake to avoid rolling off into the gorge below, I spotted the glow of a camp fire. Walking into the firelight unannounced, I scared 100 years' worth of curry out of an old shepherd and his grandson who were



on steep fast snow turned into something of a slalom course. Tight manoeuvring amongst the boulders added to the serious possibility of taking an unwanted plunge into the river. Such a result would have had grave consequences, literally. Luckily, we reached Chikka (place of the bears) without mishap. This large area of meadows and forested slopes marked the end of the skiable snow. It was a pleasant change.

Spring had suddenly swept over the lower valleys in the week we had been away. Hundreds of waterfalls cascaded down steep cliffs, hinting at the warmth that was now melting the snow above. In a few short weeks the shepherds from the villages below would start to bring up their flocks of sheep. Once again dark clouds were gathering above us so we made our way quickly down along the river not wanting to be caught out in a sudden downpour. Secretly we both hoped to reach Manali that night, but it was not to be.

The track was indistinct, and after crossing the river for the umpteenth time we inevitably got lost. In the growing darkness a steep narrow path led us up and away from the river. It then became a race against the night to find a spot large

tending a couple of cows. We managed to find a level spot amongst the boulders and, after finishing the last of the food, crawled into our bivvy bags.

Huw was restless.

'Seems to be a few cats about, Glenn.'

'Probably lots of them, Huw.'

'Hmm, I guess the bears will be out and about as well.'

'Doubtless, Huw.'

He turned over, staring into the night sky.

'I can feel another bout of insomnia coming on', he mumbled.

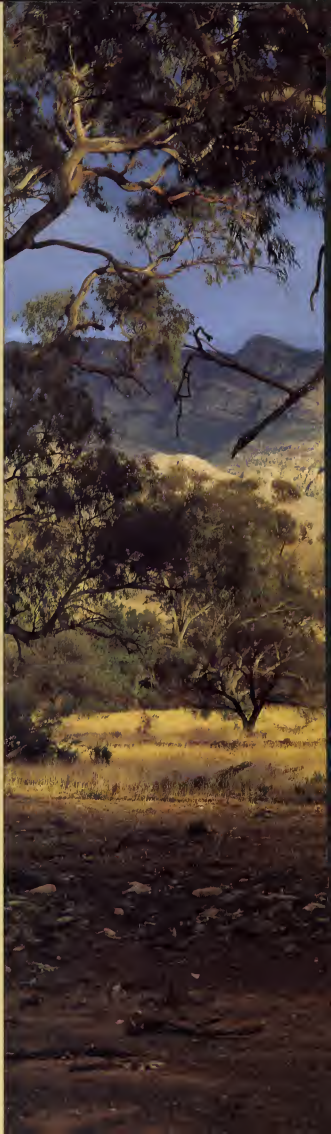
Next day, having completely underestimated the distance, we walked out of the forest and into Manali. As we had not eaten since the night before, the famous Mayur restaurant was our first stop. Described as a cross between the restaurant at the end of the universe and a retirement home for forgotten hippies, we sat back and relaxed in its smoky comfort to strains of Jimi Hendrix and Bob Marley. We both ordered chappati, beer and chips. **W**

Glenn Tempest (see Contributors in Wild no 4) has been a Special Adviser to WILD since our second issue. A renowned raconteur, climber and mountain photographer, Glenn is an experienced and enthusiastic cross country skier.



*The Flinders Ranges from the west. **Right**, the southern aspect of Wilpena Pound at sunset. All photos were taken in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia.*

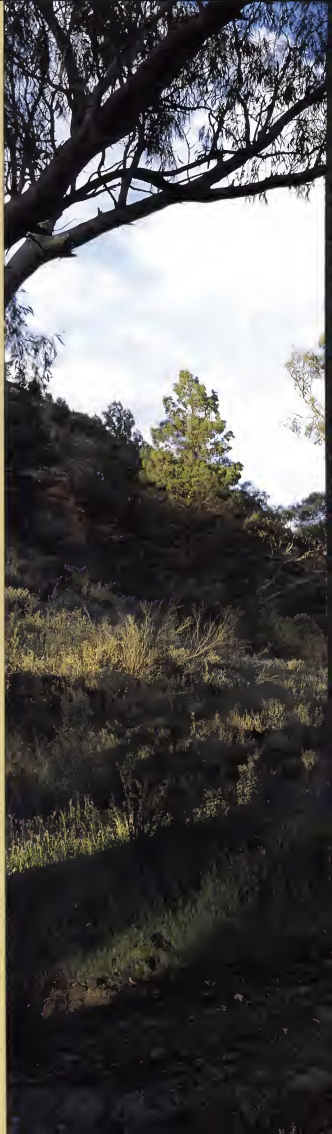
Simon Judge







Waterhole, Arkaroola region, northern Flinders Ranges.
Right, Middle Gorge at sunset.







Wild Climbing

A DODDLE C



Things don't
always go as
planned in the
New Zealand
Alps ...
Will Steffen
confesses

N MT HICKS

● 'IT'S JUST A DODDLE,' SAID SIMON CARR with a broad sweep of his arm, 'you'll be back down at the hut in time for afternoon tea'.

That was just what I wanted to hear as I slumped on to the lower bunk at Gardiner Hut, a barrel-shaped shelter with one of the least scenic views in New Zealand's Southern Alps. Gardiner Hut is sandwiched deep in the Hooker valley with extensive views of moraine rubble, barren hillsides and the labyrinth of the Hooker Icefall. It was that icefall that made the view particularly distasteful to me.

John Finnigan and I had just completed a long day of pack-hauling up the Hooker valley. It ended with a nerve-wracking trip through the icefall, under teetering seracs



John Finnigan 'running on empty' after his doddle on Mt Hicks. Will Steffen *Left*, Will Steffen climbing on the South Face of Mt Hicks and no doubt wondering what he is doing there. John Finnigan

and over giant ice blocks, devilishly smoothed to spin at the slightest weighting. The climb up Pudding Rock was the *coup de grace*. I was not impressed.

A doddle, therefore, was just what I had in mind. It was the second week of our New Zealand climbing trip, and, along with Armando Corvini, we had just completed a demanding ice climb on the South Face of Mt Green.

The route John and I had chosen on the South Face of Mt Hicks was the Dingle-Button Gully, less severe or committing, we thought, than the Central Gullies or the Yankee-Kiwi Couloir in the middle of the face. Simon Carr confirmed our reasoning.

We had a lot of respect for Simon's judgement. He is one of those lean, fit Kiwis who have extensive knowledge of the mountains from their numerous weekend sprints over, around and through the Southern Alps.

What we had not counted on was Simon's ability to produce the classic Kiwi understatement. He can make a forced

bivouac near the summit of Mt Cook in a raging storm sound like a slightly unpleasant evening at a motel in Timaru.

The next morning, as we plodded round the corner toward the Empress Glacier, we got our first good view of Mt Hicks. Hunking like a malevolent black giant behind Mt Cook, the domed summit of Hicks sends spidery fingers of ice down its sheer south face. It is a formidable mountain.

Lulled into complacency by Simon's reassurances, we abandoned a true alpine start the following day and settled into a second brew at Empress Hut. It was well after daybreak when we stepped off the rubble in the 'shrund at the base of the mountain and started banging our way up the ice. An easy first pitch reinforced our complacency.

Below, the South Face of Mt Hicks seen from Empress Hut. **Far right**, climbing crumbling rock high on the South Face. Steffen



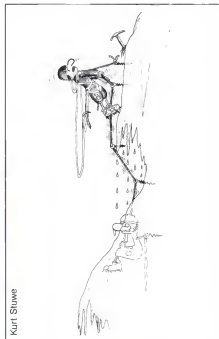
Soon, however, conditions changed dramatically. The gully narrowed and steepened considerably, forming a giant funnel for ice and rocks dislodged by the increasing heat of the March sun. Debris flew by our heads, not with a slow clatter and rumble, but with a high-pitched whine as if shot from a cannon. We felt like ducks marching helplessly through the target area of a carnival shooting gallery.

Worse yet, we found the condition of the ice increasingly difficult as we climbed the gully. It was harder than we expected, forcing us to use three, four, or five blows with each tool and with each crampon to secure a reliable hold. The process was not only time-consuming, but it sapped our energy, which we would need later for the demanding descent.

As John led the final pitch of the thousand-foot gully, the ice began to dinner-plate. I heard three or four sharp blows with his axe, then the sickening

cracking sound of a sheet of ice breaking away and sliding down the gully towards me. I quickly learned to bury my head against the gully wall with my pack hunched up over my shoulders; one sheet of ice struck squarely on my helmet and shattered into thousands of sparkling fragments that showered down the gully.

After hours of painstaking climbing, we finally left the ice gully. Already we had lost valuable time as it was early afternoon



and ahead lay 300 metres of unknown and vertical rock and a long and potentially dangerous descent.

Instead of finishing the climb on the well-known Divide Route, we opted for a new route following a series of steep ridges and shelves that led directly from the top of the ice gully to the summit dome.

John led, first over easy rock and then on to an increasingly narrow ridge of that rotten, loose black rock for which the Southern Alps is renowned. John has aptly described climbing it as 'trying to climb up library book shelves as the shelves are coming loose and books are tumbling down all around you'.

The rotten ridge ended in an apparent impasse, a vertical wall with few holds. John then moved down off the ridge, traversed along the wall and round a corner, and disappeared. A few minutes later I heard an exclamation, 'You're really going to like this!' I have climbed long enough with John on Australian crags to know what that exclamation means: it means that he has found a sequence of moves so technical and strenuous that, with a very tight rope and numerous pulls on protection, I have a 50-50 chance of struggling to the top of the pitch.

This time, however, I was surprised as I traversed round the corner and stepped into an airy chimney, a vertical chute with no bottom that looked right down a precipitous ice gully to the base of the

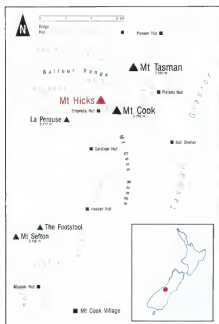
mountain. There were just enough holds along the sides of the chimney to bridge across as we worked our way up; beautiful climbing in a spectacular setting.

Four pitches later and we were on the summit ice cap of Mt Hicks. Our doddle had turned into an exhausting, demanding climb; there would be no afternoon tea back at Empress Hut.

It was one of those summit days that mountaineers dream about. The sky was cloudless and only a gentle breeze wafted across the top of the mountain. The Tasman Sea, over three vertical kilometres below us, shimmered in the late afternoon sun, and to the east the view stretched down the Hooker valley to Lake Pukaki and beyond. Only Mts Cook and Tasman still soared above us.

We could not linger on the summit as the descent still lay ahead. Mt Hicks is one of the few mountains in the Southern Alps with no easy routes down the mountain.

Mt Hicks



The favoured descent, the Curtain Route, starts down a steep gully on the North Face, then moves on to a snow slope that leads to Harper Saddle and finally to the Empress Glacier.

With just an hour and a half of daylight left, we were in trouble as we had only one 50 metre rope, thus necessitating anchors every 25 metres on the abseil down the gully. This situation forced us to consume more time and energy on the descent, just when we needed to move quickly to avoid a forced bivouac.

With the sun nearly gone and our physical and mental states near exhaustion, we made the sensible decision and stopped for the night. We were not sure how much further we would have to abseil to reach the snow slope, but just one mistake in the fading light would almost certainly be fatal.

We traversed out of the gully, which was prone to rock and ice fall, and out on to the north face in search of a bivouac



ledge. The best we could find was a slightly sloping terrace, only 50 centimetres wide, above which a small niche led into a crack system.

John drove two pitons into the crack and we methodically hung our gear, and then ourselves, from the pitons. We were ill-prepared for a night out on the mountain as we had travelled light to avoid just such a circumstance. We had no sleeping bags, no down clothing, no stove, and the only food we had carried, a single chocolate bar, we had eaten on the summit.

The first half hour was tolerable, even pleasant, as we watched the lights of Fox Glacier township on the West Coast far below and imagined what mundane but comfortable activities the villagers were carrying out. But then, as we lost the body heat from the day's climbing, the reality of hanging for ten hours from the side of Mt Hicks with nothing to protect us from a nor-westerly began to sink in.

Soon the little creek that had flowed down the gully was frozen solid. Wedged on the ledge with no way of changing positions, we too were soon chilled through. John, worried about frostbite, periodically removed his boots, placed

them carefully on the ledge, and massaged his feet. I spent most of the night alternately flapping my arms like a mad chicken and vigorously rubbing my thighs.

Finally, after what seemed an interminable length of time staring at the brilliant sky, I watched Orion set and knew the worst was over. We would survive the night and, with a bit of luck, finish the retreat to Empress Hut in time for morning tea.

The only thing that remained was to devise an explanation for how we managed to turn a doddle into a 36-hour epic, and for how we spent a night hanging from the North Face of Mt Hicks with no bivouac gear.

As time passed, the reality of our experience began to blur into our revisionist version. The climb became a bold new route on a difficult mountain and our forced bivouac turned into a conscious choice to enjoy the purity of a night in the open high on a mountain.

Months after the climb I met a friend on the street, 'I heard you had quite an epic on Mt Hicks earlier this year'.

'Not really', I replied with a sweep of my arm, 'it was just a stroll'. ■

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The Kokoda Trail

David Mossop gives the low-down on doing this famous Papua New Guinea walk

● THE KOKODA TRAIL CROSSES PAPUA NEW GUINEA from Kokoda in the north, over the Owen Stanley Range, to Owens Corner, 45 kilometres north of Port Moresby. The trail gained notoriety during the Second World War when Japanese forces advanced as far south as Imita Ridge before being forced to retreat. Along the trail, for those who are willing to look, there remains considerable evidence of the fighting. Today the Kokoda Trail is especially popular among Australians as a challenging and historically interesting walk.

The trail runs for 96 kilometres through rainforest-covered mountainous terrain and along it there are a number of villages of varying sizes. In these villages it is usually possible to buy some fresh fruit, and in the case of Myola, stay at a fully catered guesthouse. Many of the villages have airstrips which are serviced with various frequencies.

When planning an itinerary, bear in mind that many of the people in this part of Papua New Guinea are Seventh Day Adventists and thus it may be difficult to arrange, for example, a public motor vehicle (PMV) on a Saturday.

When making arrangements in Papua New Guinea do not get overly frustrated when they go astray. Do not expect everything to run to the same minute-conscious schedule you expect at home.

Parties intending to walk the trail should contact the National Emergency Service, PO Box 391, Port Moresby, to inform them of the party's plans, and get any up-to-date information on the trail.

Access. Most people walk the trail from the northern end, that is from Kokoda to Port Moresby. Air Niugini has a regular service from Port Moresby to Popondetta. In New Guinea the cheapest and best form of transport is the PMV. From Popondetta Airport a PMV can be arranged for the 20-minute ride into Popondetta itself. To reach Kokoda another two-hour PMV ride is necessary along a fairly rough road.

At the other end of the trail, Owens Corner, transport into Port Moresby is more difficult. It is best to make arrangements before leaving Port Moresby, however transport could be negotiated with one of the PMV drivers living several kilometres along the road towards Port Moresby.

Equipment. It is a strenuous and muddy walk so comfortable boots are strongly recommended, and gaiters are useful. While on the lower sections of the trail it is possible to do without a sleeping bag, but it gets quite chilly at night in the higher sections, so it is best to take one. Due to the high rainfall it is not wise to rely on being able to light a fire, and stoves should be carried. Even in the dry season several days of rain should be anticipated and some form of rain gear carried. A comprehensive first aid kit should be carried as in the tropics the risk of infection is much greater.

When to go. The dry season is the best time to go. This is from May to October, with the best months probably being August and September. During this time the trail will be less muddy, and finer weather can be expected.



Crossing Iora Creek's log bridge the safest way! David Mossop

Maps and information. Papua New Guinea Topographic Survey 1:100,000 sheets, Kokoda, Efogi and Port Moresby.

Longitudinal Section of the Kokoda Trail prepared by the Department of Works and Supply (PNG) is very useful, showing the most apparent aspect of the trail, the ups and downs. It is available in Australia.

Retreat from Kokoda by Raymond Paull provides a good history of the Kokoda campaign.

Bushwalking in Papua New Guinea by Riall Nolan (Lonely Planet) has a description and good general information.

The walk described here takes seven days. However, it can be done in five long days or spread out over 12 days. Times given in these notes are approximate, but generally about 40 to 50 hours of walking are involved. A rest day might easily be included at Myola. Most villages have some form of shelter or guesthouse where walkers can stay for a small fee.

Kokoda to Hol, one and a half hours
Starting from the District Office at Kokoda, take the tractor track heading directly south. This leads through banana palms, overgrown gardens and thence through a rubber plantation, passing Kovel Number One before becoming a foot track. After about one and a half hours a tin shed is passed and a medium-sized creek crossed. On the other side of the creek there is a corrugated iron lean-to, similar to those found elsewhere along the trail with enough room for three or four people.

Track Notes

Hoi to Aiola, six and a half hours

Continue along the track taking the right-hand fork up the hill (the left one leads to Hoi village). There are now two hours of steep climbing, occasionally passing through abandoned gardens. At the top of this long climb a garden which is still in use is reached. From here it is another three and a half kilometres with numerous small ups and downs to the deserted village of Isurava. Isurava was abandoned several years ago, yet six or seven hills still remain. Leaving Isurava there is a series of descents to minor creeks, passing a turn-off uphill to the right (which would be a possible but not particularly pleasant campsite). An hour and a half more brings you to Aiola. Approaching Aiola there is an open area with good views back down the Iora Creek valley towards Kokoda. Aiola is reached after a short but steep descent. There is a shelter before the village as well as a more comfortable one in the village.

Aiola to Templetons Crossing Number Two, six hours

Be careful to locate the correct track out of Aiola. It follows a steep curve down and round before a sign 'Iora CK' is passed. Follow this down on a narrow track through the forest, gradually descending to a tributary of Iora Creek. On the other side of this creek there is a steep, rather slippery section followed by some relatively gentle walking to Iora Creek itself. Here the track continues a short distance upstream before the crossing is reached. The crossing is simply a bundle of logs over the deepest section followed by some easy wading. After heavy rain this crossing would become dangerous. Take care to locate the track on the

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other side as it is quite small. The track opens into a small clearing before starting a one and a half hour climb up a narrow ridge. At various points trenches and fox-holes can be seen near the track. After this ridge is climbed the track drops to Templetons Crossing Number Two on Iora Creek. This section is abundant in leeches. The campsite at Templetons Crossing Number Two is small. There is a corrugated iron lean-to and minimal space for tents.

Templetons Crossing Number Two to Myola/Kagi, six hours

Iora Creek is not crossed here and the track continues on the east side well above it for around one hour, before dropping down once again to Templetons Crossing. There is no clearing or shelter here, and with normal river levels the crossing presents no problems. Iora Creek is the last water for two and a quarter hours. From the crossing it is a steep one-and-a-quarter-hour climb (340 metres) up Mt Bellamy to Kokoda Gap (2,190 metres), the highest point on the trail. Near the high point there is a small clear area allowing good views back towards Kokoda. Once over the top of Mt Bellamy it is a pleasant gradual descent to a minor creek crossing where there is a shelter made of bush materials. It is then an easy walk to the signposted turn-off to Myola. While the traditional route is via Kagi, the diversion to Myola is well worth while. The map is incorrect at this point as Myola village has moved to the south-eastern corner of the larger of the two Myola 'lakes'. After several days' walking a rest day here is recommended. The village is reached after an easy two-hour walk from the signpost. The guesthouse at Myola was set up when the village moved to its present location in 1983. It costs ten kina (approximately \$A15) per person per night to stay here, but this includes all meals. The fresh food is excellent. From Myola it is possible to make a three-and-a-half-hour (return) walk to the waterfall on Iora Creek, or a one-and-a-half-hour (return) walk to the 'plane in bus', an American fighter plane which crashed during the war while trying to reach the safety of the open plain.

Myola/Kagi to Elogi Number One, six hours

Returning from Myola along the same track, about one hour from Myola and having passed beneath the roots of a large pandanus palm, a track branches off to the left and leads to the small village of Naduli (not marked on the map). Having passed through the gardens of Naduli there is a very steep descent to the Elogi River, followed by an equally arduous ascent to Elogi Number Two (Launumu). From the hill behind the village the larger village of Elogi Number One can be seen. It is only a short, 100 metre, descent to Elome Creek, and a 70 metre climb back up to Elogi Number One, where there is a guesthouse. There is also a radio here (if it is working!).

Elogi Number One to Menari, four hours
Just below Elogi Number One is an airstrip. The track leads down to a creek on the left side of this, then up the long climb of Brigade Hill. Going down the other side of Brigade Hill the track becomes progressively steeper, plunging down to the Vabuiagi River. After the 700 metre descent a swim here is most welcome. Menari is reached after an easy walk up then across the airstrip. Once again there is a guesthouse.

Menari to Ofi Creek, eight hours

Naoro is reached by continuing up over the

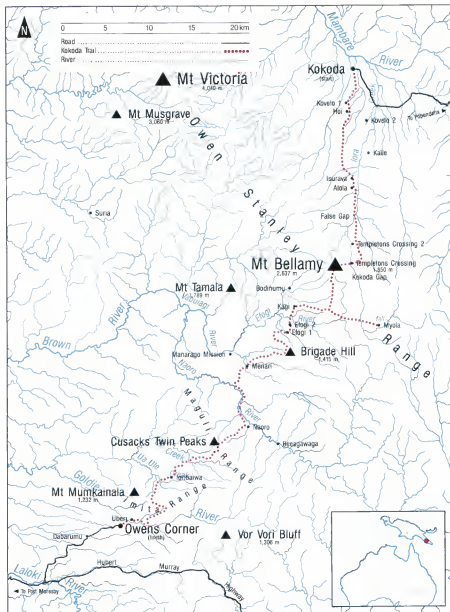
saddle south-west of Menari, then dropping down into the Naoro River swamps. This area is very muddy after rain and the track can be difficult to follow so a compass may be useful. (The trail has now been marked with reflective markers through the swamps. Editor) During the five kilometres across the swamps only one log-crossing of the Naoro River is necessary before Naoro airstrip thankfully appears. Near the airstrip are the remains of a light plane which crash-landed here about four years ago. It is either possible to stay in Naoro or continue a further four hours over the Maguli Range to Ofi Creek. The climb up the Maguli Range is both long (605 metres) and steep, and the lower sections among the kunai grass can become very hot. At the top there is a shelter made of rough bush materials before another long (750 metre) descent to Ofi Creek. At Ofi Creek there are a few possible tent sites in the vicinity of the crossing, or it is possible to cross and continue up 250 metres (three quarters of an

hour) to where a small sign indicates the way to a clearing atop a small hill (no water).

Ofi Creek to Owens Corner, nine hours

The track continues along a ridge, gradually downwards past the site of Ioribaiwa before dropping steeply to Ua Ule Creek after about two hours. This creek is crossed twice before the track continues up a series of minor creeks. Here the trail is marked by white plastic markers or signs with a 'KT'. Be careful not to stray up the wrong creek. The final obstacle on the trail is Imita Ridge. The track follows a very steep and narrow ridge and it is easy to see why the Japanese did not even attempt to capture it. The climb takes less than an hour and once on top there are good views back to Mt Bellamy. Once over the top the track is wide and easy to follow, leading down to Ueberl (abandoned) and thence the Goldie River. Having crossed here it is possible to camp just above the river or to continue for an hour up the final steep hill to Owens Corner. **W**

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- Tape-sealed seams
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- Windows close from inside
- Frost-resistant zips
- Interior pockets and rings



Eureka! tents for all seasons



Canada

Lightweight Tents

Wild Gear Survey

Mobile homes without the hernias; by Neil Blundy

● **TENTS, MORE THAN ANY OTHER ITEM** of walking equipment, are the products of compromise. The lighter the tent the greater the compromise in comfort, space and weather resistance. Tents that weigh less than 3.6 kilograms are surveyed here and about one third of these are classified as one-person tents only. Lightweight shelters such as unsupported bivvy bags have not been considered. There are, of course, many heavier tents available, and some of these were included in the winter tents survey in *Wild* no 20.

Size. The first thing to consider when purchasing a tent is the size you require. Larger tents and extra features such as vestibules weigh more, although the comfort gained, particularly when camping in bad conditions, may make them worth while.

Weights given in the table are measured, not the manufacturers' claimed weights. Your needs will be governed by the seasons and the places that you like to walk, as well as the number of days at a time spent camping out. The interior measurements given in the table are the maximum in each dimension. Tents come in numerous shapes and many taper sharply. You will need to see the pitched tent to assess its true volume. Tall people will find that some tents are too short to lie in comfortably. Always get inside and try before you buy. Tent **roominess** has been rated for specified sleeping capacity. Some one-person tents will shelter two people if required.

Materials. Most of the tents surveyed have two skins. The fly, or outer skin, is made of coated (usually polyurethane) nylon fabric and does not breathe. Water vapour will condense on its surface, particularly in cold, still conditions. The inner tent is made from either an unproofed nylon fabric or a lighter open mesh. While giving a nice airy environment, mesh will not help insulate the tent as well as fabric in cold conditions. It also provides less protection against condensation dripping from the fly. The Chouinard tents have a single proofed nylon skin.

Weather resistance. Resistance to both wind and water are important properties for a tent. In high mountain environments, tolerance of snow accumulation and wind is particularly important. Tents with more poles tend to be stronger, although good design is also important. The fly should pitch taut, be free of wrinkles, and come low to the ground. The neatness of pitch is often one of the major differences between good and poor quality tents. A vestibule helps to protect entrances, particularly from driven rain and snow.

Ventilation. Designing a tent with ideal ventilation and good weather resistance is a challenge. Vents that encourage cooling breezes to flow through the tent during summer

will also expose you to icy blasts in other seasons.

Ventilation is important for cooling in hot weather and to reduce condensation, particularly when cold. The inner tent needs to ventilate in hot weather. Look for large mesh panels and doors. Two entrances give excellent flow-through ventilation but involve a weight penalty.

Exhaled and perspired water vapour passes through the porous inner tent and must be evacuated before it can condense on the fly's inside surface. A tent that constantly sheds condensation is little better than one which leaks. Draughts between the fly and inner tent are encouraged by fly vents, partly opened doors, and flies that do not extend to the ground, but often with reduced weather resistance.

Pole sleeves that link the fly and inner tent when pitched inhibit draughts. Most are intermittent or made of mesh to offer less resistance to air flow. Some tents, such as the Macpac Eclipse and Olympus and Wilderness Equipment First Arrow, have pole sleeves in the fly and a series of Velcro tabs to connect the inner to the fly, allowing unhindered air circulation.

Poles are made from either aluminium alloy or fibreglass. Most poles come shock-corded together for easy assembly, which is an advantage. It is my experience that alloy poles, with their very high tensile strength, are stronger than most fibreglass poles. The American Easton aluminium poles are used extensively in the New Zealand tents. Some of the Korean tents have similar-looking alloy poles.

It is possible to break all types of poles. Check on the availability of spares and emergency repair sleeves. Unlike the old 'A' style tents, modern hoop designs cannot be strung up easily with sticks or from trees should your poles be lost or broken. Treat your poles with respect, and if you must carry them strapped to the outside of your rucksack make sure that they are securely attached.

Floor. Lightweight tent floors are particularly vulnerable. Even the best quality proofed fabrics seem to leak after some wear. Lighter floors save weight but are more prone to damage. A light fabric or foam groundsheet underneath the tent can improve protection from moisture and wear. Alternatively, I have found regular reproofing quite effective.

Pegs. To keep the specified weight down, some tents are supplied with a minimal number of pegs. It may be necessary to add pegs to keep the tent securely anchored in strong winds. If the tent comes with steel pegs, consider changing to aluminium to save weight. For snow and very soft or sandy ground, aluminium pegs with a large cross-section will be required

to give sufficient holding power. The weight of all tents in the table includes the minimum number of pegs required, of the type supplied.

Colour. Light-coloured tents are brighter during twilight and on dull days, and are generally preferred, but be prepared to wake with the sun!

Seam sealing. The sewn seams on all nylon tents are potential leak points and should be sealed. Tents with tape-sealed floor and fly



Give me shelter! Glenn Tempest

seams are indicated in the table. A liquid seam sealer may come with your tent or can be bought separately.

Quality. Tent quality depends on materials, construction and design. Both poles and fabrics may vary in quality. It is very difficult for the consumer to identify differences in the quality of various nylon fabrics and proofing. Better quality fabrics have a higher thread count (tighter weave). Hydrostatic head test results do not indicate proofing durability and are not usually given, making comparison difficult. The quality of waterproofing required for a fly to do the job is not nearly as high as that required of a floor, where the fabric may be immersed in water and have the pressure of people rolling around on it.

Look for tents with even, well finished seams. Stress points at pole sleeve ends, corners and peg points need to be reinforced. Zips should not be subject to excessive tension while opening and closing. The design and 'cut' of the

Caribee tents are made from flame-retardant taffeta nylon. The porous inner-tents have open-mesh panels to encourage ventilation. **Ultra-light**, eight-millimetre-diameter hollow woven-fibreglass pole segments are shock-corded for convenient assembly. Together with the guy-cords and pegs supplied, Caribee tents are easy to erect, disassemble, and pack into their own stuff sacks. Naturally, workmanship and materials are guaranteed.

Caribee

The most extensive range of packs and tents in Australia. Ask for Caribee tents, packs and accessories at Paddy Pallin, Scouts, Southern Cross, Mountain Designs and all other good bushwalking shops.

Caribee tents



Isodome 7050
Four-pole dome. Twin zip entrances with concealed mesh screens and vestibules. Two ventilating mesh ceiling panels. Reversible fly with reflective metallic coating. Capacity: three person. Size: 251 x 208 x 122 cm. Weight: 3.7 kg.



Caddis 7052
Three-pole tunnel. Twin zip entrances with concealed ventilating-mesh screens and vestibules. Capacity: three person. Size: 240 x 180/160 x 110. Weight: 3.3 kg.



Dome 7054
Three-pole dome. Twin zip entrances with concealed ventilating-mesh screens. Reversible fly with reflective metallic coating. Capacity: three person. Size: 243 x 213 x 125 cm. Weight: 3.1 kg.



Blivy 7053
Two-pole tunnel. Ventilating mesh ceiling panel. Capacity: two person. Size: 245 x 121 x 60 cm. Weight: 1.4 kg.

tent is also very important. A well cut, taut fly will shed wind and rain much more efficiently than a baggy one.

Care and maintenance. Mildew is a tent's greatest enemy. Clean your tent, using a mild soap and warm water if necessary, and dry thoroughly before packing it away. Pay particular attention to pieces of webbing, corners and creases which may be damp long after the tent appears dry. Clear tentsties carefully; watch for sharp twigs and stones and avoid dead overhanging branches. Nylons and proofings can be affected by acids and solvents (including Shellite). Methylated spirits, however, is not harmful and can be used in moderation to clean stubborn stains.

Use. Staying warm and dry whilst camping often depends as much on the skill of the user as the quality of the tent. There is no substitute for experience. Select a campsite protected

from prevailing winds by trees and large rocks. Avoid depressions and runnels which will collect water.

Sleep with your head near the entrance and do not close vents unless absolutely necessary. If the tent has a double door, open the non-porous layer to encourage air circulation. Despite all precautions, condensation will still occur inside the tent in some conditions, particularly around the tub floor where the tent sides are formed by proofed fabric. A small sponge is useful for mopping up this moisture before it has a chance to spread to your clothes and sleeping bag. This should be your first task in the morning after a cold frosty night. Try to sleep so that your sleeping bag does not contact the damp tent walls.

Some tents allow the inner to be removed from within the fly in wet conditions, so it can be packed away separately. Always try to keep

wet items such as boots, parka and rucksack outside the inner tent. The advantage of a vestibule for storing these items is obvious. Using a stove inside a tent is not recommended. Apart from the vapour released and obvious fire hazard there is the danger of carbon monoxide build-up. (See the stove surveys *Wild* nos 6 and 24.) A stove may be used in the vestibule, but take care.

Leave the vestibule partly open, particularly while lighting the stove, both for ventilation and so the stove may be ejected from the tent if the unexpected occurs. Finally, do not pitch tents too close to open camp fires. Flying sparks will melt through nylon very quickly and make a nasty mess of your expensive toy. **W**

Neil Blundy (see Contributors in Wild no 15) has walked and skied extensively throughout Australia and New Zealand, and lives with his wife and two children in Box Hill, where he runs an outdoor equipment shop.

Wild Gear Survey Lightweight Tents

		Intended capacity, persons	Maximum interior length x width x height, centimetres	Measured weight, kilograms	Materials, inner/fly	Poles	Peg points, minimum/maximum	Vestibules	Seamless or seam-sealed floor/fly	Roominess	Ventilation	Ease of pitching	Weather resistance	Quality	Approx price
Caribee Korea															
Bivy	2	245 x 111 x 54	cm	1.4	Mesh/proofed nylon	2 fibreglass	4/8	None	No/no	•	•	•••	•	•	\$133
Orbit	2	260 x 150 x 106	cm	2.1	As above	1 fibreglass	6/12	None	No/no	••	••	•••	•	••	\$185
Wedge	2	211 x 138 x 127	cm	2.8	Nylon/proofed nylon	2 fibreglass	0/0	None	No/no	•	•	•••	•	••	\$144
Dome	3	211 x 237 x 127	cm	3.3	As above	3 fibreglass	0/9	None	No/no	•	•	••	•	••	\$220
Caddis	3	238 x 180 x 111	cm	3.2	As above	As above	8/14	2	Yes/no	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$229
Chouinard USA															
Pyramid	2	274 x 150 x 170	cm	1.4	None/proofed nylon	1 aluminium	4/8	None	No floor/no	•••	•	•••	•	•••	\$219
Megamid	3	274 x 274 x 170	cm	1.6	As above	As above	4/8	None	No floor/no	•••	•	•••	•	•••	\$249
Companion Korea															
Ultralight 1	1	225 x 106 x 64	cm	1.1	Mesh, proofed nylon/proofed nylon	2 fibreglass	4/10	None	No/no	•	•	••	•	••	\$66
Shelter	1	229 x 110 x 102	cm	1.2	Nylon/proofed nylon	1 fibreglass	3/10	None	Yes/no	•	•	•••	•	•	\$123
Ultralight 2	2	240 x 158 x 64	cm	1.4	Mesh, proofed nylon/proofed nylon	2 fibreglass	4/6	None	No/no	•	•	••	•	••	\$96
Wedge	2	214 x 131 x 128	cm	2.5	Nylon/proofed nylon	As above	0/10	None	No/no	•••	•••	•••	•	••	\$159
Orion	3	238 x 180 x 116	cm	3.4	As above	3 fibreglass	12/18	2	No/no	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$254
Eureka Korea															
Crescent 1	1	245 x 102 x 107	cm	2.0	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 aluminium	3/8	None	Yes/no	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$249
Crescent 2	2	248 x 152 x 114	cm	2.4	As above	As above	4/9	None	Yes/no	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$325
Timberline 2	2	220 x 150 x 105	cm	3.3	As above	5 aluminium	4/10	(Optional)	Yes/yes	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$259
New Caddis	3	240 x 181 x 116	cm	3.6	As above	3 aluminium	14/26	2	Yes/yes	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$475
Fairydawn New Zealand															
Dragonfly	1	202 x 95 x 80	cm	1.9	Mesh/proofed nylon	2 aluminium	3/9	1	Yes/no	•	•••	•••	••	•••	\$295
Trilogy	2	208 x 121 x 109	cm	3.5	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 aluminium	5/15	1	Yes/no	••	•	••	•••	•••	\$534
Sting	2	205 x 125 x 101	cm	3.6	As above	4 aluminium	4/16	2	Yes/yes	••	•••	••	•••	•••	\$625
Hallmark New Zealand															
Solo	1	235 x 136 x 94	cm	2.6	Mesh/proofed nylon	2 aluminium	5/9	None	No/no	•••	•••	••	••	•••	\$322
Oan	2	236 x 140 x 97	cm	2.6	Nylon/proofed nylon	As above	9/15	None	No/no	••	••	••	••	••	\$343
Chrysalis	2	240 x 137 x 100	cm	3.0	As above	3 aluminium	5/17	1	No/no	••	•	•••	•••	•••	\$458
Jensport Korea															
Mohave	1	215 x 149 x 97	cm	2.3	Mesh/proofed nylon	2 aluminium	7/9	1	No/no	••	•••	•	•	•	\$229
Mountain Dome	2	209 x 152 x 109	cm	3.1	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 aluminium	2/14	2	No/no	••	•••	••	•••	••	\$378
Macpac New Zealand															
Microlight	1	230 x 128 x 95	cm	1.8	Nylon/proofed nylon	1 aluminium	4/8	1	Yes/no	••	••	•••	••	•••	\$260
Eclipse	2	210 x 125 x 125	cm	2.4	As above	As above	4/8	1	Yes/no	••	••	•••	••	•••	\$325
Delta I	2	220 x 150 x 120	cm	2.9	As above	2 aluminium	10/14	1	Yes/no	•••	••	••	••	••	\$410
Olympus	2	224 x 146 x 112	cm	3.4	As above	3 aluminium	4/16	1	Yes/no	•••	••	••	•••	••	\$545
North Face United Kingdom															
West Wind	2	238 x 152 x 108	cm	2.4	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 aluminium	7/17	1	No/no	•••	•	•••	•••	•••	\$599
Stockade Korea															
Caddis	3	240 x 180 x 116	cm	3.5	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 fibreglass	14/26	2	No/no	•••	•••	••	••	••	\$289
Wilderness Equipment Australia															
Dart	1	204 x 89 x 50	cm	1.1	Gore-Tex	2 aluminium	3/9	1	Yes/no	•	••	•••	••	•••	\$318
First Arrow	2	207 x 146 x 121	cm	3.4	Nylon/proofed nylon	3 aluminium	3/7	1	Yes/yes	••	•••	••	•••	•••	\$999

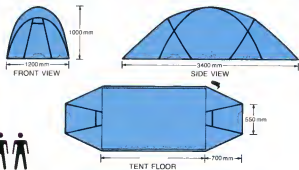
AS USED BY AUSTRALIANS ON MT EVEREST AND KANGCHENJUNGA IN 1987

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The unique four hoop pole structure ensures maximum length and sideways stability, enabling Sting to withstand hurricane force winds, heavy mountain snowfalls, and monsoon type rains.

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Reviews

Kiandra to Kosciusko by Klaus Hueneker (Tabletop Press, 1987, RRP \$32.95).

Australia's high country is ruled by the elements. Its history is not about the policies of princes, but the way ordinary folk have responded to a unique environment.

Klaus Hueneker has compiled *Kiandra to Kosciusko* from a large data base of interviews, diaries and photographs. The result pulsates with his enthusiasm for the high country and those who go there.

Although there is some earlier history, the main focus of *Kiandra to Kosciusko* is on the last 50 years. The result is a fascinating collection of tales which walkers and skiers will want to read.

Not all is original: many chapters are written by others, and have been published elsewhere. I would have appreciated a clearer statement of just when and where these chapters first appeared.

There is little academic analysis of material; Hueneker is more concerned to tell the stories. And there are plenty of these, including snow rescues, epic trips and exploration.

Pleasingly, the large number of photographs, including pictures of historic interest, are placed through the book so they relate directly to the text. But, as it is largely concerned with journeys of one kind or another, a book like this needs maps more detailed than those provided.

In exploring the odd by-ways of Kosciusko folklore, Hueneker at times betrays himself into minutiae, as in the page devoted to the names of those in the 1977 Commemorative Crossing. But overall, the snippets of information will be a source of interest for years to come.

As with *Huts of the High Country* (see *Wild* no 8), *Kiandra to Kosciusko* will be sought by those who have been touched by the mystique of the Snowy Mountains.

Brian Walters

Walks in the Blue Mountains National Park by Neil Paton (Kangaroo Press, 1987, RRP \$9.95).

How to See the Blue Mountains by Jim Smith (Second Back Row Press, second edition 1986, RRP \$9.95).

Both these books are guidebooks to easy bushwalks in the central Blue Mountains. Both are of similar size and format and cover much the same territory. Both are illustrated with black-and-white photographs and numerous maps.

Although designed for the same audience, their styles are quite different. Neil Paton is more conversational in his approach, describing fewer walks in more detail. He often includes personal anecdotes, such as finding a water tank dry.

Jim Smith includes much material of historical interest, and some of his idiosyncratic conservation views, but little information on the actual walks. However, his book provides a good, although not completely comprehensive, list of walks that will be of interest to bushwalkers of all levels of experience. As a child growing up in the Blue Mountains I explored many of the walks described. I was



Modern-day explorers of the Mt Kosciusko region, near Gungahlin. Klaus Hueneker

therefore interested to see a number of unfamiliar walks listed, some of which have been reopened by Smith.

I was surprised to see no mention of Blue Gum Forest in Jim Smith's map of the upper Grose valley. He also neglects the fascinating area near Bell Station which features many easy walks accessible by public transport. He describes one of the ways into Wollangambe Canyon but does not mention any of the tracks or routes out of this very popular walking and Li-Loing area. His book also neglects many of the interesting places that are accessible by walking along fire tracks, such as Mt Hay and Mt Twiss, or Grose Trig, north of Winallee.

Neil Paton is a little more ambitious in the area he covers, giving mention to Cox's River and Yerranderie. He also describes the area near Deep Pass in the Wollangambe Wilderness but fails to mention two of its most interesting features—the small canyon nearby and the walk-through crack in a giant rock pagoda.

Both of these volumes would provide a good starting point for anyone contemplating the easier tracked bushwalks in the Blue Mountains.

David Noble

The Grampians A Noble Range by Jane Calder (Victorian National Parks Association, 1987, RRP \$24.95).

Long popular with naturalists, walkers and rockclimbers, the Grampians are a series of rugged sandstone ranges in western Victoria, surrounded by farmland. With their amazing rock structures and abundant wildlife, the Grampians were of particular importance to the Aborigines, examples of whose art, both 'caged' and in its natural environment, can be seen to this day. Despite considerable human involvement in the area since the Aborigines, for a great variety of commercial activity from logging to quarrying, the Grampians still retain many of their charms. This is particularly so for those prepared to leave the roads which, sadly, criss-cross the area. If Halls Gap was ever an attractive place, that was a long time ago. Today it is like a mid-summer beach resort which has been dropped into one of the most spectacular valleys in Victoria.

The *Grampians* has chapters on the area's geological origins, the Aborigines and the coming of white settlement, commercial development, leisure activities, and plants and animals. The book concludes with a list of the origin of many Grampians place-names and a number of useful appendices.

The book is similar in style and format to the VNPA's classic best seller, *The Alps at the Crossroads*, published 13 years earlier. However, *The Grampians* is a better production, well designed and produced, and includes a handful of colour photos.

It is amazing that a region of such natural significance should have to wait until 1984 to



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Reviews

become a National Park, and even then a very much compromised one, with logging to continue until the middle of the next decade. Jane Calder has taken a remarkably low profile, indeed some might say she has 'sold out', on the highly controversial environmental and management discussion of the Grampians, issues which in many cases are a long way from being resolved. And, whilst *The Grampians*



Mt Stapylton, one of the most popular rockclimbing and walking areas in the Grampians. Graeme Wheeler

is a large-format book of some 200 pages, it has relatively little text, and with a number of key subjects barely scratches the surface. These ranges await a major work to do them justice.

Chris Baxter

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Alpine Area Planning Proposals A Basis for Management (Victoria's Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands, 1987, RRP \$3.00).

Published at the end of June (we received our copy on 2 July), *Alpine Area Planning Proposals* contains over 140 pages of proposals for the management of Victoria's most important wilderness area and on which the public was given two months or less to comment—a major opportunity for public involvement in planning the alpine area, as CF&L puts it. It will then 'serve as the basis for the development of management plans'. The map of the area in question, showing existing National Parks and other public land in the 'Planning Area', highlights the pitifully patchy and inadequate nature of Victoria's proposed and most feted 'Alpine National Park' out of which the Victorian Government makes so much mileage. The omission of much of the headwaters of the Jamieson, Wongungarra and Buckland Rivers, for example, are glaring omissions, as is the exclusion of a vast tract of land east of Mt Buller.

It is proposed that 'Fuel reduction burning will continue to be an integral component of the Department's fire protection policy', and that priority be given to the 'maintenance of fire access tracks'. Several pages later it is noted that 'the Alps' overall wilderness quality has declined markedly since 1945. This has been brought about particularly by the extension of the vehicle track network. It is proposed that vehicles, including bicycles, and horses be prohibited from entering certain 'Wilderness zones'. However, with this possible exception, it appears that the present motorized 'invasion' of the Victorian Alps will be allowed, indeed

Photo: Chris Bonkman

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Reviews

encouraged, to continue unchecked.

In a number of areas, such as the Howqua valley, CF&L intends to develop new, 'well constructed' walking tracks, and other 'facilities' for walkers.

It is proposed that deer hunting, using firearms, be allowed in the Wonnangatta-Moroka National Park!

Consistent with CF&L's knowledge of and attitude to them, rockclimbing and abseiling are singled out for a number of proposed unwarranted controls and restrictions which



In the heart of Victoria's Alpine Planning area, the Barry Mountains. Chris Baxter

are not proposed for other activities—including many which are more dangerous and/or have a far higher environmental impact. For example, rockclimbing and abseiling may be subject to restrictions 'to protect faunal breeding sites or other conservation values' and banned outright in 'Special Protection zones', whereas other activities listed, including hunting, four-wheel-driving and horse-riding are apparently not to be restricted in this way! Similarly, commercial climbing and abseiling organizations visiting the region must be licensed, whereas commercial activities in other fields, including kayaking, four-wheel-drive tours and ski touring, apparently need not. What the proposed licensing criteria are is anyone's guess!

Grazing on 4.5% (!) of the area will be phased out by 1991, but is to continue over most of the alpine area. Logging will continue much as it is practised now, until 1996.

Submissions closed on 31 August.

CB

The Bushwalk Book of South-East Queensland by Ross Buchanan (Bushpeople Publications, 1987, RRP \$11.95).

Bushwalkers of south-east Queensland have waited nearly seven years for the arrival of a new guide such as this. Being relatively close to Brisbane, the region is very popular. Beginners and veterans frequent the many and varied walking areas, making an accurate and up-to-date guide much needed.

The book, like the region it describes, is suited to enthusiasts of all levels of experience. For those just starting out, Buchanan includes a lot of helpful information regarding the basics—navigation, equipment and the minimum impact philosophy are all covered. Each area is discussed separately; the route descriptions are concise, and fairly easy to follow.



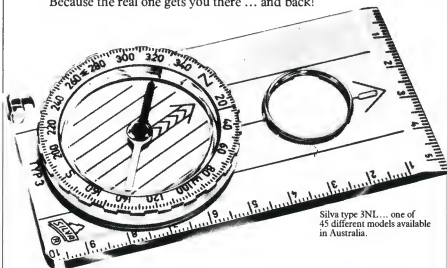
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Buchanan voices strong opinions against the inclusion of maps in guide books, considering them subject to misuse by the less experienced. While he has given numerous and extensive references to the National Mapping Grid, he has included no maps at all.

Whatever your level of experience, a current and accurate guide is invaluable when venturing into unfamiliar areas. While it is the only up-to-date version currently available, *The Bushwalk Book of South-East Queensland* certainly has everything a good regional guide should have. It will probably be some time before a better guide to the area is written—perhaps another seven years.

Mark Yuile

Exploring Queensland's Central Highlands by Charles Warner (published by the author, 1987, RRP \$13.95).

The Gornarvon Gorge is well known to many bushwalkers throughout Australia. Indeed, its splendid scenery makes it a popular destination for visitors not only from Australia but overseas as well. However, as Charles Warner points out in *Exploring Queensland's Central Highlands*, the area has far more to offer than just this spectacular system of gorges.

The book is obviously written with the more experienced enthusiast in mind. As one of the main attractions of the area is its lack of development, this is not surprising. Many points of interest are off the beaten track, and quite a few require some effort to get to. At times the route descriptions are somewhat sketchy with few times or distances being given, but routes are all well referenced to the National Mapping Grid so readers can make their own decisions.

In addition to the usual 'what to see' and 'how to get there' information, Warner has included detailed data on annual weather patterns, geology and natural history, which make the book far more useful. The abundance of Aboriginal art that decorates the rock walls of the many cliffs and gorges is also mentioned, with an explanation of the associated history.

If you are adventurous, and prefer to experience wilderness without the 'improvements' of the more popular areas, Queensland's central highlands have much to offer. In producing this guide Warner has achieved his aim—to present all the information necessary, and let those who wish to explore the region do so.

MY

Canoeing the Rivers and Lakes of Victoria by Chris and Yvonne McLaughlin (Macstyle, 1987, RRP \$12.50, including post, from PO Box 78, Hampton, Vic 3188).

Chris and Yvonne McLaughlin have pooled their extensive knowledge of the Victorian waterways to produce a very useful guidebook to Victorian inland paddling venues. This comes hot on the heels of their successful publication of *Canoeing the Rivers and Lakes of New South Wales*. The information in the book is up to date and accurate. Canoeists of all interests, from expert white-water enthusiasts to recreational paddlers, are well catered for in the descriptions of 52 rivers and 60 lakes.

The book starts with general information about canoeing. This includes the river geography of Victoria, map references, the grading system, and access to river height information. There is also a useful section on safety, equipment, first aid and hypothermia.

This section is not exhaustive, but the basic rules applicable to canoeing are covered adequately.

The descriptions of the rivers and lakes are divided into seven geographic regions. Lakes and rivers are listed geographically both in the contents and in the index, giving easy reference to areas of interest or a particular river or lake.

A general description of each river system is followed by details for each section. These include clear descriptions of access and finishing points, trip duration, minimum and maximum river heights or discharge, location of gauges, and grading. Rapids and hazards of note are given more detail, and are often accompanied by sketch maps. Sketch maps are adequate but should be supplemented with other maps, which are not always listed. Many of the river descriptions have been extended from those otherwise available, including the Murray from Corryong to Renmark, and the Owens from Porepunkah to the Murray. The section of the Snowy River in New South Wales and the Swampy Plains River are also included for continuity. A river level summary would have made a very useful addition, for quick reference to determine whether a river is canoeable.

There are many new descriptions of lakes and coastal inlets. Again clear details of launching places, camping areas and amenities are given. These should be of particular interest to family groups and the nature enthusiast.

Canoeing the Rivers and Lakes of Victoria will be a most useful reference for all canoeists. Lawrence Stokes

Better Rivers and Catchments—Victoria, Australia (Victoria's Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands, 1987, RRP \$4.00).

River users already know what land clearing, pollution and the pressure of an increasing population have done to many of the State's rivers. This book will bring this information to a wider audience. Increased community awareness is an important first step in slowing, and ultimately preventing, the degradation of our rivers and catchment areas.

This book follows *State of the Rivers*, which was published in 1983. That book highlighted the problem of river degradation, whereas *Better Rivers* shows what is being done, and discusses what should be done, to restore and protect Victorian rivers.

It is an interesting book and worth buying, if only for the double-page map showing all of Victoria's rivers! Some of the photographs, which starkly portray the outcome of poor land management—river bank and gully erosion, river silting, pollution, salinity—will sadden many people. The publisher has invited comments to the proposals put forward, so everyone with an interest in this subject should put pen to paper.

Yvonne McLaughlin

The Grampians map (Victoria's Department of Conservation, Forests & Lands, 1987, RRP \$4.50).

The Grampians is a revised edition of the old 1:125,000 scale Forests Commission of Victoria map. Of little use or interest to most users, various parks and reserves are picked out in different colours. The approaches to the area from Mt Arapiles, which appeared on earlier editions, have been cut out. Flat Rock, near Mt

Stapylton, is shown incorrectly. The back of the map has 1:50,000 scale maps of the Mt Stapylton and Halls Gap areas as well as notes about the Grampians generally.

CB

The Ash Range by Laurie Duggan (Picador, 1987, RRP \$12.95).

The Ash Range is in Gippsland in eastern Victoria, between Bruthen and Tambo Crossing on the Omeo Highway, but as far as this book is concerned it is Gippsland. *The Ash Range* is a work of poetry and prose which provides

unfortunately the maps in the book are hardly adequate to satisfactorily locate them all and therefore to be able to understand the hardships endured as the country was being traversed.

While reading *The Ash Range* one is struck by the extent of the drama which has been played out in Gippsland over the centuries; particularly the amount of destruction which the place has had to withstand—both natural and man-induced. It is a testimony to the ranges that they have survived so well, and *The Ash Range* is to be highly recommended.

Doug Humann



Wentworth River Diggings, Gippsland, Victoria. Lithograph by Charles Floedel, reproduced from *The Ash Range* with the permission of the National Gallery of Victoria.

the reader with glimpses of Gippsland through time and place.

At a time when Gippsland is very much in the public mind due to pressure from the timber industry, and various other groups, for continued and indeed increased access to Crown lands, *The Ash Range* provides a point of reflection on the historical development of Gippsland. The author uses a variety of primary and secondary material; letters, explorers' journals, diaries, newspapers, photographs and sketches.

Laurie Duggan has crafted all this material in a unique way and added his own personal touch to make original material more readable, often reconstructing it in a poetical form and adding his own worthy verse. The 'poem as history' commences where Gippsland is born out of the fury of the Aboriginal dreaming and passes through the Europeans, fire and flood to the twentieth century.

The Ash Range will be of most interest to those who know Gippsland's plains, valleys, and ridges and to those with a literary or historical bent. There is a plethora of places mentioned in the course of this documentary poem, and

Safety in the Bush (Hobart Walking Club, seventh edition 1986, RRP \$6.00).

If you are planning a bushwalk in Tasmania, here is some local advice. This is a concise and comprehensive bushwalking manual with a Tasmanian emphasis.

The text is sober and stolid, and so is the book's appearance.

Michael Collier

A Pocketful of Gumnuts by Keith Watson (Craftsman Publishing and the author, 1987, RRP \$12.95).

Are you one of those people who likes to collect the pretty flotsam of the bush, who accumulates on mantelpieces the contorted pods of hakeas, casuarina cones or warty eucalyptus buds? Or were you brought up with Mae Gibb's gumnut babies and big, bad banksia men? You would enjoy this book. It celebrates 17 years' craftsmanship realizing the imaginative potential of our extraordinary diversity of seed pods. Possums emerge from gumnuts and banksia buds, a kurrajong becomes the double bass for a jazz player, itself formed from bits of mistletoe, red ironbark and grevillea. The result makes you look more closely at the gumnuts in your pocket and appreciate a little more the bush around you.

Stephen Garrett

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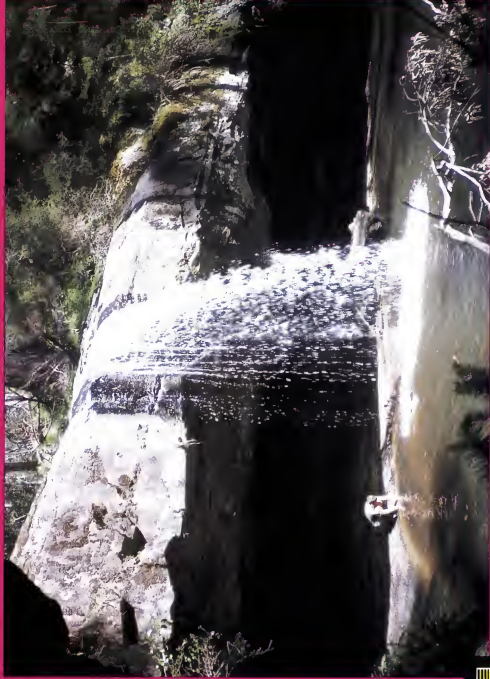
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Reviews

Extreme Rock edited by Ken Wilson and Bernard Newman (Diadem, 1987).

Climbing by Thomas Hrovat (Weishaupt Verlag, 1987).

Following the tried and true formula of his books of classic British climbs and walks, Ken Wilson's long-awaited latest offering brings his well developed craft to a high pitch. A substantial tome of some 300 pages, *Extreme Rock*



Martin Atkinson on The Prow, Raven Tor, one of the hardest rockclimbs in England. Photo by Glenn Robbins, reproduced from *Extreme Rock*.

includes a liberal lashing of (generally very good) colour photos. Much of the writing, by a range of contributors, is hardly inspiring, but Wilson's enthusiastic and meticulous approach shines through. This, and the many superb photos, will ensure *Extreme Rock* a place in the bookcases of most climbing addicts.

Another large-format rockclimbing 'glossy', this time from Austria, *Climbing* is a collection of colour rockclimbing photos with English (poorly translated) and German captions, and a brief text. There are chapters on Joshua Tree and Yosemite in the USA, followed by various European rockclimbing venues. Some of the photos are excellent, and most set the pulse racing, but too often the editors have striven for 'art' rather than action, with massive blow-ups of the most esoteric subject matter. And whilst it might be all the rage, if you have seen one photo of Lycra-clad youth grimacing on boulders and beside bolts on limestone walls you have probably seen 'em all: a book almost full of them is 'over the top'.

CB

Living on the Edge by Cherie Bremer-Kamp (Macmillan, 1987, RRP \$29.95).

Misleadingly sub-titled 'The winter ascent of Kangchenjunga', this harrowing account of an attempt on a winter ascent of the world's third-highest summit by expatriate Australian nurse Bremer-Kamp with her American husband and one high-altitude porter has, none the less, received considerable acclaim in the mountaineering Press. And rightly so, for to come close to such a goal is an heroic

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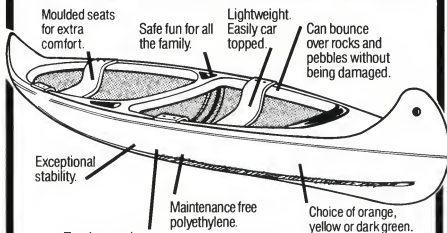
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Reviews

achievement. The attempt was abandoned with the death of her husband, Chris Chandler, of acute altitude sickness at 7,500 metres. Bremer-Kamp and Mogul were lucky to escape from the mountain with their lives, but in the process each lost extremities to frostbite.

Living on the Edge is a truly epic tale, of rare courage against terrifying odds. However, much more than this, it will long be remembered as a remarkable love story told with a candour rarely seen in enlightened biographies let alone mountaineering books.

CB

Mount Everest Massiv Nord by Johannes Kielkowski (Aree Greul, 1986).

Described as volume one of a 'Himalaya-Handbuch', *Mount Everest Massiv Nord* is claimed to include the first-ever descriptions to routes on the world's highest mountain and neighbouring peaks. The spiral-bound guide includes 46 route drawings and three maps, which make it a valuable and unique reference despite the fact that it is written only in German. It includes a detailed summary of expeditions to the region. Available for DM 22.80 from Aree Greul, Am Goldsteinkamp 28, D-6000 Frankfurt a/M 71, West Germany.

CB

Protecting the Environment A Conservation Strategy for Victoria (Victorian Government, 1987, no charge).

The Victorian Government's vision for Victoria 'is built on the three pillars of social justice, economic development and environment conservation' proclaims its latest 'strategy'. The government, in this booklet, has expressly committed itself to the protection of our natural heritage.

So far, so good.

The expression of good policies is an essential start, but means little without implementation of those policies. This needs resources and hard decisions. Without these, the 'strategy' will be merely a public relations exercise.

The strategy is well researched. Did you know, for example, that 'participation in bush walking has grown by approximately 15% a year'? The need for protection of the environment is well documented.

But faced with this need, and voicing such policies, will the government act accordingly? For example, there is pressure to log vital wilderness areas in East Gippsland. The strategy declares the government's intention to 'ensure the highest level of protection for the State's most environmentally significant areas...'. Logging would provide negligible economic development for Victoria. The logical decision will be to protect East Gippsland's wilderness areas in National Parks. Victorians expect nothing less.

This strategy is very good as far as it goes. We will wait to see just how far it does go.

BW

Other Titles Received

Australia-A Travel Survival Kit by Tony Wheeler (Lonely Planet, 1986, RRP \$17.95).

Moments of Doubt by David Roberts (The Mountaineers, 1986).

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3161.

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This sturdy shoe is low-cut for freedom of movement and lightness. It features a nylon shank for stability, a one-piece leather forefoot with Cordura quarters and leather heel and side panels. A foam padded leather tongue and Cambrelle lining ensure comfort. Cushioning from EVA midsole with dual density EVA heel and the non-clogging Waffle sole with toe-guard. Available in Men's and Women's sizes Av. Weight 950 g **\$139.00**

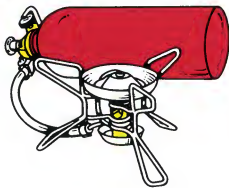
NIKE ZEALAND

A high-cut boot offering additional ankle support. Shares the same construction and features as the Thunderdome. Ideal for track walking, low-altitude trekking and as a mountaineering approach shoe. Average Weight 1.1 kg **\$169.00**

The brilliant new mountain dome from Jansport. A sturdy four alloy pole configuration creates a spacious living area and ensures a stable, free-standing structure. The Pod's full length fly sheet encloses a storage vestibule at each end and twin entrances with insect screens allowing flow-through ventilation. Anchor points include flysheet guy flaps. Available mid-October. Weight 3.5 kg **ONLY \$399.00**

WHISPERLITE STOVE

The light, compact stove with big performance. Weighing 350 g the WhisperLite can boil a litre of water in under four minutes — yet is easy on the hearing! It holds easily for packing and comes with windscreens and heat reflector. **SPECIAL PRICE \$89.95**



Paddy Pallin

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Helmets

A Wild survey of helmets for climbing and abseiling

● **Skulduggery.** To many rockclimbers, it seems, a hole in the head is more fashionable than wearing a helmet. Unfortunately even witnessing the results of a severe head injury fails to leave any impression on some hardmen.



...they also help to keep your hair on. (Lyn Peninsular, North Wales.) Chris Baxter

Beyond the social stigma that marks a climber as a beginner or a nerd, helmets are hot and cumbersome. With the introduction of fibre-reinforced thermoplastics and airy designs however, objective excuses are harder to come by.

A helmet protects the head from falling objects or impact during a fall or pendulum by absorbing some of the impact and evenly distributing the load over the whole skull. The energy of impact is absorbed by shell distortion (flexing) and fracture (denting), lining compression (especially important during side blows) and harness stretch.

All the helmets surveyed (except the Cassin 240 and Dalyle Adventurer) are UIAA approved. To meet current UIAA standards, a five kilogram weight dropped two metres on to the top and half a metre on to the front of the helmet must result in a force to the head of no greater than 10 kilonewtons. The shell crown must also resist the penetration of a pointed one kilogram weight dropped one and a half metres.

When buying a helmet make sure the harness will adjust to your head size, as well as accommodate a Balaclava and glacier glasses, which may be needed while alpine climbing. Some models come in two or three sizes; others adjust to fit a range of head sizes. Heavier helmets are more tiring to wear. Compact and close-fitting shells are less likely to restrict movement while caving or climbing. A helmet should protect ears, eyes and temples

without restricting hearing or vision. A flared rim enhances ear and eye protection as well as increasing shell rigidity and weather resistance. Ventilation is encouraged by high vents, a large internal clearance, and channelled lining. Polypropylene and carbon fibre helmets are not currently available in Australia.

Helmets

	Shell material	Weight, grams	RRP
Cassin Italy			
240	ABS	390	\$49
241	Nylon, rubber	420	\$73
Dalyle New Zealand			
Adventurer	ABS	550	\$66
Edelrid Germany			
Quince	Nylon	465	\$99
Petzl France			
Ecor	Nylon	440	\$78
Vertical	ABS	500	\$60
Snowdon Mouldings United Kingdom			
Joe Brown	Fibreglass	650	\$89
Joe Brown (unlined)	Fibreglass	550	\$79
Ultimate Equipment United Kingdom			
Ultimate Climbing Helmet	Fibreglass	650	\$89

● **Climbers Fly Undone.** To the desperate rockclimber a bolt is an oasis. In Australia, bolts are generally common engineering bolts driven into a undersized hole, a sound method in solid rock. While not demanding the skill of placing nut protection, clipping these bolts is not as straightforward or hazard-free as it may appear.

It is not uncommon for twisting forces, such as those generated when interlocked karabiners and bolt brackets are shock loaded, to unclip ropes from karabiners, and karabiners from karabiners. Bolt brackets should only be clipped with a quick-draw (a short flexible sling with a karabiner at each end) or a locking karabiner (which can cause rope drag).

Another problem is the tendency for brackets to lift off bolts while the bracket key hole is occupied by both the bolt shaft and karabiner. This can occur if the karabiner can fit into the parallel slot meant for the bolt shaft and if both the bolt and karabiner can fit into the bracket eye. This is more likely to happen the further the bolt head is from the rock. While it is difficult to demonstrate this, I know of three such unclippings this year. Unfortunately, the small karabiners most likely to place you at risk are the ones chosen for their ease of handling and clean entry into the bracket. If placing bolts (without fixed hangers), make sure the head is no more than one centimetre from the rock. When placing a bracket on a bolt shaft, use a Stopper wire between the bracket and bolt head to hold the bracket against the rock and reduce excessive play. When clipping a bracket, use a karabiner made of larger diameter rod than the bracket slot. Make that bolt an oasis, not a mirage.

Mike Law

● **Material World.** Budding manufacturers and do-it-yourself enthusiasts will be interested to know that a selection of materials, including coated and uncoated Du Pont Cordura, ripstop, Oxford, Parapac and taffeta nylon, and polyester and cotton fabrics are available from Sailtex (Australia) Pty Ltd, 64 Rednal Street, Mona Vale, NSW 2103. (02) 997 7266.

Bradmill Textiles, 341 Francis Street, Yarraville, Vic 3013, (03) 314 0166, supplies canvas, and AGT Raddins Canvasware, 322 Bay Street, Port Melbourne, Vic 3207, (03) 646 4156, can help with canvas, cord and webbing.

If you have trouble finding foam, Fastex buckles, webbing, zips and other accessories, try Outgear Pty Ltd, PO Box 6, Maribyrnong, Vic 3032, (03) 317 8886.

● **Tucked In.** In dramatically upgrading its sleeping bag range, Paddy Pallin has for the first time introduced a trio of sophisticated mummy sleeping bags. To reduce heat-loss, mummy style sleeping bags taper with your body to reduce unnecessary internal volume.

The Paddy Pallin Bimberl, Jagungal and Twynam accommodate bending knees and waist without pinching the bag and inducing an attack of claustrophobia, and have a down collar and curved shoulder which passively seal round the neck, and a snug, elaborately contoured duvet-style hood. The side zips are sealed from above by a single plump draught tube. Each bag has a left- or right-hand zip and joins to other Paddy Pallin mummy bags.

The Bimberl has 550 grams of down and a total weight of 1,250 grams. RRP \$329. The Jagungal has 950 grams of down and a total weight of 1,750 grams. RRP \$479. The Gore-Tex covered Twynam has 1,100 grams of down and a total weight of 1,900 grams. RRP \$699.



Paddy Pallin Jagungal sleeping bag.

● **Thin End of the Wedge.** Mountain Designs packs (with the exception of the Gangotri series) are now available with Wedgetail harnesses. Padded and curved shoulder straps slide independently up and down a pair of flared aluminium staves. Different-sized shoulder straps, and lumbar- and hip-belts are removable and interchangeable to achieve a more accommodating fit. There are short and long hip-belts in two thicknesses, and shoulder straps in three lengths. Women's versions of the Baltoro 1 and Rongbuk 1 have contracted harness configurations and narrower hip belts and shoulder straps. The Baltoro packs are available with texturized-nylon-reinforced canvas as well as 1,000 denier texturized nylon sacks.

GORE-TEX FABRICS ON TOP

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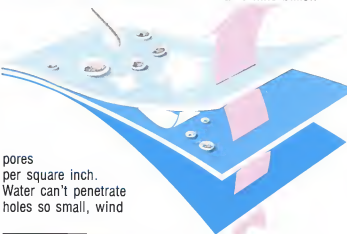
Waterproof, breathable Gore-Tex® fabric protects you from the elements. Unlike conventional coated fabrics which are hot and clammy to wear and tend to lose their



Greg Mortimer wearing a Gore-Tex® down suit on the summit of Mt Everest. Photo Tim Macarthy-Snape

water resistance after repeated use, Gore-Tex® stays watertight and comfortable, year after year.

Demanding use in the field, including many Everest expeditions (such as the First Australian Mt Everest Expedition) have proved that. Gore-Tex® fabric is made by permanently bonding a tough, flexible microporous PTFE membrane between layers of durable fabric. The membrane contains nine billion



can't blow through but perspiration can evaporate, keeping you dry, comfortable and safe.

Bushwalkers, climbers, skiers, runners and golfers around the world depend on Gore-Tex® fabric garments,



The 1984/85 Australian Men's Alpine Ski Team wearing their Gore-Tex® uniform.

hats, gloves, footwear, tents and bivvy bags: protection from the elements and lightweight breathable comfort.

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Seam sealing is critical to the performance of waterproof garments. Seams are permanently waterproofed and strengthened with hot-air-welded three-layer Gore-Tex® seam-sealing tape.

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W L Gore and Associates offer a three-year warranty on Gore-Tex® fabrics used in garments bearing the Gore-Tex fabric warranty tag. You are assured of the best functional combination of weatherproof protection with breathable comfort, now with an unprecedented three-year warranty.



Creative Technologies Worldwide

Trade enquiries: **W L Gore & Associates (Australia) Pty Ltd** PO Box 707 Brookvale NSW 2100 Telex 73355 Answerback code 02GORE Telephone (02) 938 5755 *Gore-Tex is a trademark of W. L. GORE and Associates *Registered trade marks of W. L. Gore & Associates Inc

**GORE-TEX
FABRICS**



● **Duo.** The Mountain Designs Polarplus Trilogy Liner has zip-off sleeves, high collar, and two pockets. The Liner's front zip engages a matching concealed zip inside the Trilogy Gore-Tex shell. With sleeves or as a vest, the Liner joins the Gore-Tex shell at the front zip and clips at the neck and shoulders. The Trilogy Liner has a RRP of \$170, and the shell RRP is \$364. Together, the versatile *Trilogy Jacket* and Liner have a RRP of \$495.



Mountain Designs Trilogy Liner.

● **T-Bones.** Made from a T-section aluminium alloy extrusion, *Chouinard T-Stakes* tent pegs are designed to survive repeated pounding into hard ground yet offer sufficient surface area to be useful in sand and snow. T-Stakes are available in two lengths—203 millimetres, 34 grams, RRP \$5.60; 241 millimetres, 59 grams, RRP \$6.75, at Paddy Pallin shops.

● **Strength and Beauty.** The *Walrus Orbit Rapide* is an unusually airy, cavernous and light (3.4 kilograms) two- to three-person four-season tent that, like most large domes, sprawls extravagantly over a large site. Six shock-corded extruded-aluminium poles are permanently stored in their inner tent sleeves. Once the procedure is learnt, erection is rapid. Rather than spanning the entire tent diameter, the six poles radiate from one of two hubs, forming two overlapping tripods. The fly stretches over the inner tent and must be guyed for an optimum pitch. With three shorter fibreglass wands, the fly flares outward to form hoods over the door and window. There is no vestibule. Floor and fly seams can be sealed with a sealant provided. RRP \$895 at the Brisbane Scout Outdoor Centre.

● **Fun Bags.** Tired of mopping up condensation and spilt food with your sleeping bag while tent-bound? The seam-sealed *Mont Bell Ultra Light Gore-Tex Sleeping Bag Cover* makes your sleeping bag warmer and waterproof. It is mummy-shaped and snug-fitting to reduce the condensation common inside heavier and baggier bivvy bags. The Ultra Light Sleeping Bag Cover has a contoured hood and draw-cord and weighs 440 grams with stuff sack. RRP \$249 at Paddy Pallin shops.

● **Bummer.** A comfortable triangular canvas sack for use with an improvised tripod is available from several Sydney shops for about \$20.

● **Stuffed.** Keeping pack contents dry while canyoning, caving or Li-Loing can be traumatic. Canoeists' dry sacks can be useful but their closure mechanisms are often cumbersome for pack carrying. Dianna Bisset has come to the rescue with her hard-to-lose egg-yolk-yellow pack liners. *DB Stuff Canyon Bags* are made from welded woven-nylon-reinforced polyvinyl chloride (PVC) sheet. The throat is gathered and folded, and fastens with a shock-cord loop. Simple. 35 x 70 centimetres, RRP \$15.85; 45 x 80 centimetres, RRP \$19.85; 60 x 130 centimetres, RRP \$23.75.

● **Quickie.** *D Best Mountaineering Quickies* are a straightforward opposing-wedge solution to the thin-parallel-crack rockclimbing protection problem (see *Wild* no 24, page 83). A small spring-loaded brass wedge can be steered across a face of the principal wedge which resembles a common aluminium Stopper (with a more acute taper) on a swaged wire loop. Six colour-coded sizes cost between \$45.70 and \$52.75 each at Mountain Equipment, Sydney.

● **Sting.** Because of our currency difficulties, American and European tents are becoming a rare sight on Australian shop floors. But this does not mean we have seen the last of North Face, Wild Country and Lowe influences. Anyone familiar with Wild Country's Quasar will recognize the *Fairlydown Sting* two-person four-season tent. The inner tent and strong self-supporting four-hoop frame pitches first. The seam-sealed fly pitches with a minimum of four pegs, compressing the frame and contributing to the tent's stability. This elongated dome has a rectangular seamless tub floor and an entrance and vestibule at each end. The tent we saw had a two metre long floor and weighed 3.6 kilograms. New models will be about 10% longer. RRP \$625.

● **Jekyll and Hyde.** *Asnes Skithlom* skis (see *Wild* Gear Survey in *Wild* no 25, page 81) are possibly the most versatile cross country and downhill skis ever made. Narrow, wax-based, metal-edged, light-touring skis with an alpine flex, they combine the lightness and speed required for fast, comfortable day-touring with the downhill control necessary for carving Telemarks down steep slopes. Their tip torque, side-cut, flex pattern and weight also make them well suited for skating.

Skithloms are designed for a Nordic racing event which involves a downhill slalom combined with a level section of race trail followed by an uphill and then a final downhill run over jumps. But since they are only 49 millimetres wide at the waist (the reason each ski weighs only a kilogram with bindings), they may not be a good choice for beginners, who are generally better served by broader, more stable touring skis.

Skithloms feel comparatively dead while diagonal striding. Having no central wax pocket, or double camber, they lack the spring that resists kicking to compress the wax against the snow and the bounce of the rebounding ski which initiates the ensuing stride.

Skithloms attempt to embrace irreconcilable objectives. The even flex pattern needed for good downhill turning and skating means these skis are not quite as fast on the level as traditional stiff-centred light-touring skis, while their narrowness (required for the lightness

which makes continuous fast skating and striding possible), means they require more tactful edging than wider skis designed specifically for XCD (especially when parallel turning in soft snow). Nor are they stiff enough for extended pack-carrying with heavy loads. Yet they are in many ways an inspired compromise, and will delight fitter skiers seeking skis with fast touring qualities and excellent turning ability, especially if they wish to skate, for which these skis can be fully glide-waxed.

John Turnbull

● **Wax Fax.** The skating-on-cross-country skis craze has particular significance for Australian skiers because our snowfields are often about as good for skating as it is possible for ungroomed snow to be, due to the relatively high temperatures which cause the snow to rapidly metamorphose and settle.

Consequently it is not only racers who are adopting the new skating styles, but also tourers, including overnights, who are finding that the extra weight of their packs gives added impetus to the skating stride. As the various skating strides are still evolving—racers have not even settled on the optimum length for poles yet!—nobody is sure where it will all end, except that the new techniques and equipment are combining to set a whole new crop of records, such as David Hislop's sizzling Perisher-Kiandra run last winter, stripping nearly two hours off the old record.

So anything that enhances skating is of interest, and the new *Swix* skating waxes will attract a lot of enthusiastic experimenters. They are: turquoise for temperatures from -20°C up to -5°C ; violet from -6°C up to 0°C ; orange from -1°C up to 3°C ; and white, for temperatures from 2°C up to 10°C .

But perhaps most interesting of all is the new *Dura Glide* skating wax, which is combined with others, according to temperature, to increase durability for long trips.

New, too, is the *Swix Super Riller*, designed to cut minute longitudinal serrations in ski soles as the last step in tuning before applying the running wax, a technique that increases speed appreciably.

If you have waxless skis, try glide-waxing their tips and tails. It will protect the plastic against drag-inducing oxidation and scratches, increase their glide, and make turning easier. *Swix* publishes a little waxing booklet that tells how.

JT

● **Bull's-eye.** The *Wilderness Equipment First Arrow* two-person four-season tapered *tunnel tent* is one of the more robust "bomb shelters" we have seen. Three hoops feed cleanly into sleeves in the tape-sealed fly which is stretched taut over them with the aid of shock-cord loops at ground level. The inner tent hangs from Velcro tabs and can be pitched separately or integrally. Pitching is fast and requires a minimum of only three pegs. Interior pockets are located high, away from recumbent occupants. The seam-sealed floor has tucked corners and is designed to be easily replaced by amateurs if necessary. Four gliders on the vestibule zip, which follows the arc of the largest hoop, enable the vestibule to be opened from the ground on either side and at the top of the arch to adjust ventilation. Being at the tent's highest point and protected by a guyed flap, this

AFTER A LOT OF HARD WORK WE GOT THE BOOT!



At Ajays Snow Country Sports we've put in a lot of miles testing boots. It seems that the likes of water, mud and lots of hard going makes ordinary boots crack, wither, stiffen up and die. But it only makes a pair of Timberland boots get better and better.

You see, Timberland use only flawless, silicone impregnated leather on the uppers. And unlike ordinary boots, the four rows of stitching on a pair of Timberland boots aren't just for decoration. They're there to create an ironclad waterproof seam. All this is permanently bonded to a rugged Timberland sole.

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Unrestricted movement... Maximum comfort.

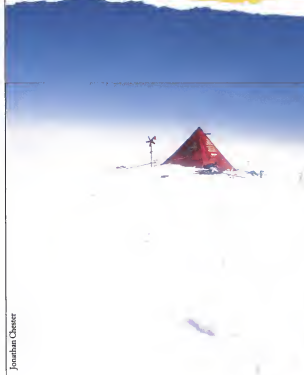


Wilderness Equipment First Arrow tent.

vent exploits natural thermal air movement to expel moisture. The inner tent and fly open at both ends. Thoughtful features such as the shock-corded guys give the First Arrow a somewhat untidy but functional appearance. Snow valances and a heavy duty floor are optional. The First Arrow weighs about three and a half kilograms. RRP \$699.

ONE function of a tent is to keep out rain, but we were now beginning to suspect that the makers of our tents were not aware of this. Every seam dripped, and, where the guys joined the fabric, rivers flowed out to collect on the floor into young lakes, which were summarily dealt with by stabbing a hole in the ground-sheet with a knife.

H W Tilman, THE ASCENT OF NANDA DEVI



When your tent is all you have to look forward to at the end of a long day...

IT'D BETTER BE A GOOD ONE!

Keep an eye out for our First Arrow and TR double-skin, seam-sealed tents.



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PO Box 83, Fremantle, WA 6160

Uncompromised Design

• **Letter from Telluride.** What are the rules of Telemarking? After three months in the USA, closely observing some superb skiers, I would say there are no rules!

We encounter many different snow conditions, so the ability to adapt your style is essential. For example, on hard-pack the shoulders should be rotated down the fall-line. In very heavy wet snow the upper body should generally follow the line of the ski tips. There are, however, certain techniques used by all the good skiers I saw.

First, the rear ski tip is placed well forward of the front binding. Position the dropped knee as close to the front ankle as you can comfortably get it. Do not 'sit back' to achieve this position, instead, make sure the trailing thigh is perpendicular to the ski. Flex your ankles! Practise at home without skis. The main advantages of this position, faster turns, better sideways stability, and more control on ice, are to a greater or lesser extent a result of being able to weight the back leg correctly.

Skiing in the above position also makes it easier to master the next technique. Front and rear skis are turned and swapped in unison. No matter how the turn is initiated (skidded, stepped or jumped), both skis are turned as one, in a similar fashion to a parallel turn. Therefore the back ski is never angled across the front ski. Visualize it in terms of changing edges. As the rear ski comes forward to initiate the next turn the new rear ski is simultaneously turned and rolled on to its opposite edge. Try practising at home without skis and remember that the back knee must also be pushed in the direction of the turn. The result is a faster, carved, and therefore more controlled turn.

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Convertible travel bags for week-end or world travel. Hide-away panel covers the Parallax harness when not in use. Compression straps control the contents. Can be carried as backpack, shoulder bag or hand luggage. Travel Kinn I, 80 litres. Travel Kinn II, 66 litres. Travel Kinn III, 72 litres.



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The secret is Aztec, a specialised pack fabric designed to satisfy MACPAC's unique demands for weather proofness and durability.

Aztec is a tightly woven blend of polyester and cotton, treated with a highly effective waterproofing solution. This solution is absorbed right into the fabric, creating a degree of waterproofness that other pack fabrics cannot match.



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Bunyip Boot Company, 316 Hoddle Street, Abbotsford, Victoria 3067. Phone (03) 417 6092. Telex AA 31348

Kimberley

Leather-lined, full-grain leather upper and insole, stitchdown construction, eye and hook lacing. Pair size 42: 1,200 grams

Flinders

Leather-lined, single-piece full-grain leather upper and insole, wire fairstitch construction, Greenland traditional lug sole, D-ring lacing. Pair size 42: 1,620 grams

Bogong

Leather-lined, single-piece full-grain leather upper and insole, cement-bonded Vibram mountain sole (compatible with Trionic-style gaiters), D-ring lacing. Pair size 42: 1,280 grams

Grey Mare

Leather-lined, single-piece full-grain leather upper and insole, wire fairstitch construction, Vibram Nordic Norm sole, D-ring lacing. Pair size 42: 1,500 grams

Bunyip Boots



Pole-plants are probably a subject causing more argument than the Telemark itself. It seems that good skiers are striving for a downhill pole-plant. To be perverse, the most impressive Telemarker in Telluride uses a double pole-plant. Trying to use a downhill pole-plant, even if not perfect, will help keep your torso facing downhill, 'pre-tuned' for the next turn, which is important on 'the steepies', hard-pack and in moguls. I can attest that these are difficult to master, mine often end up as double pole-plants.

Last but not least let's look at mounting bindings. First, never accept skis or boots which, with the boot clamped in the binding, obviously has the boot hanging over one side or the other. This is caused by a 'twisted' boot sole, or a binding not mounted squarely, and will affect your skiing.

Within a period of four weeks I used skis mounted with the pins over the balance point, over half-chord length, and mounted half-way in between. There is no doubt in my mind that the last is the best position for the cross country downhill skier, particularly in Australia.

To find half-chord length, stretch a tape measure above the ski from tip to tail (not along the ski). The balance point is found by balancing the ski on a thin metal edge, preferably locked in a vice. Mount the pins half-way in between. The main advantage of mounting over half-chord is that the ball of the foot will be toward the middle of the ski. In turning, most pressure is applied through the ball of the foot, thus mounting here will give better control of compression—although causing other problems. It can leave a long 'tail' which tends to get 'hung up', especially in moguls and 'crud'. Because the tails drop relatively quickly it can be more difficult to unweight down the fall-line and, on landing, to stay centred over the ski. Finally, skiing on flat ground is also less pleasant.

Mounting bindings between the half-chord and the balance point is an excellent compromise. However, every ski has a different weight distribution. On some skis the half-chord and balance point will be almost the same, in which case you get the best of both worlds. On others there will be a big gap. Any good specialist cross-country skiing shop should be able to advise.

Well, gear freaks, the keen Telemarker in the USA is generally seen skiing on single-cambered skis such as the Swallow TR Comp or Karhu Extreme. This year the new Tia Tote Neige and Tia Expresso have been the skis to be seen on. Hopefully they will be available here next year. Choice of skis often seems to depend on the ratio of lift skiing to back-country skiing. Mogul specialists often ski on downhill skis with cable bindings or pins teamed with Voile plates. It is not always easy to see the difference between alpine and Nordic skiing!

Telemark racers have leather boots with plastic shells riveted over almost the entire boot and clamped to a release binding. Some Merrell boots have a plastic ankle-cuff. The whisper for next year is of all-plastic boots and an entirely new range of Kazama back-country skis, consisting of just two models!

Andrew Barnes

New products (on loan to Wild), and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcomed for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices, and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send items to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

Equipment

macpac

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toughest conditions**



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Most international brands are designed for less

strenuous environments in Europe and America. Mostly, they're too small, not weatherproof, even made in Asia.

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Photo: Rod Turner NSW



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'Unbelievable...'

Tiger walk queried

I read with interest the article in *Wild* no 24 by Klaus Huenke on tiger walker Peter Treseder; his exploits are certainly impressive. However, I found some of the statistics quoted for the Barrington Tops to Walhalla walk just a bit unbelievable. As a benchmark reference I took the Three Peaks trip which is still an epic tiger walk and which was completed in the record time of 15 hours 11 minutes by Peter in August 1985. The statistics quoted for that walk in *Wild* no 19 were 87 kilometres of horizontal distance and 4,800 metres of ascent and descent. (From personal experience I feel that these are reasonably accurate estimates of the distance and climbing involved.) However, the 1,400 kilometres distance and 50,000 metres of ascent and descent claimed to have been completed in ten days on the Barrington Tops-Walhalla trip is another thing altogether.

It is the equivalent of a Three Peaks trip with an extra 53 kilometres of horizontal distance and an extra 200 metres of ascent and descent every day for ten days. Throw in snakebite, flooded rivers, thick scrub in sections, a snow-shed crossing of the Main Range at night and cumulative tiredness, and the whole thing stretches credibility a bit far.

Another reference is the recently completed Sydney-to-Melbourne ultra-marathon. This 1,060 kilometre road race was won in the record time of 5 days 14 hours and 47 minutes by the world champion Yiannis Kourou of Greece. At the same average pace the 1,400 kilometres from the Barrington Tops to Walhalla would have taken about seven and a half days but, of course, this makes no allowance for the extra duration, rough country, tens of thousands of metres of climbing, navigation difficulties, pack carrying and minimal back-up encountered on Peter's walk. Taking this into account one would expect a time of at least 15 days.

While not wishing to be a 'knocker', I have come to the inevitable conclusion that either Peter is a freak super-athlete who would win every long-distance event worldwide by a big margin or the figures are wrong. One possibility that comes to mind is that the time taken was ten days' (240 hours) total walking time and not ten calendar days as stated. (The article mentioned that Peter rested for one whole day and a number of nights.) Even then, ten days' total walking time seems rather incredible...

G N Wootton
Mornington, Tas

Quentin Chester, author of 'The Long March', replies:

Statistics are one thing but human nature is another. Peter Treseder is neither a freak nor a superman. His 'Ultimate Tiger Walk' was the

product of a lifetime of dedicated bushwalking, including a series of documented tiger walks and many months of hard training.

It should be noted that Peter's only extended rests were at Kanangra Walls and McKays Hut. The other breaks were for food and approximately four to five hours' sleep. Apart from these stops Peter was constantly on the move, both day and night. The following is a summary of the rest stops during his run: Monday 10 November 1986, Coal Seam Cave, Kanangra Walls; Wednesday 12 November, Michelago; Friday 14 November, McKays Hut; Saturday 15 November, Mt Willis South; Sunday 16 November, Blowhard Hut, Mt Hotham; Monday 17 November, Alpine Track.

Clearly Peter is a gifted athlete. But more important are his skills as walker and his highly motivated response to personal challenges. Peter's inspiration springs from a deeply felt concern for wilderness areas and the rewards of pushing himself to his limits.

Barb-wire Canoes?

As an avid white-water canoeist I was interested and concerned to read David Platt's account of his Franklin River trip (*Wild* no 25). I will declare my ignorance at the outset by stating that I have not paddled the Franklin. However, six years of paddling in south Queensland has seen me on rivers which must at least equal the Franklin for beauty, isolation and difficulty. On this basis, I feel at least a little qualified to comment, if not for the author's sake, then for the readers'.

The first rule broken by these paddlers was 'Less than three there should never be'—the cardinal rule of canoeing. The reasons for this are obvious and even more applicable in a wilderness situation. Secondly, the trip seemed poorly planned and the paddlers ill-prepared if they were still 'finding form' on the river.

When undertaking to paddle the river in winter, it must have been obvious that the level would be high and the flow fast and powerful. With numerous guides having been written about the river, the paddlers should either have known of likely difficult passages or have previously paddled the trip at low level.

Furthermore, it makes sense, and particularly so in a wilderness situation, that if a rapid is difficult to the point of being 'borderline', the logical solution is to walk...

The author is extremely lucky that he did not drown in his mishap, but the fact that these adventurers were 'successful' should not be taken as an example for others. Mishaps such as these, which sometimes result in death, are just the sort of publicity that white-water canoeing can do without. In all high-risk sports

there is one attribute which is just as important as technique and ability, but unfortunately seems to be used less—commonsense...

John McPhee
Ayr, Qld

He'll Kiss Us When He Sees the Tent Survey!

As I have been negative about a previous gear survey that featured Macpac equipment, it is only fair that I express my approval about the recent pack survey (*Wild* no 25).

Dave Jones did a particularly good job of the written section. It was both objective and informative. Of course we don't agree wholeheartedly with everything that was written, but if we all thought the same, then there would only be one brand and one model, therefore a very boring survey. Well done!

Bruce McIntyre
Manager
Macpac Wilderness Equipment
Christchurch, NZ

'This Is Your Captain Speaking...'

I wish to thank you and your staff for the presentation of the article, 'The Search for the Stinson', by Mark Yule in *Wild* no 25.

I was pleased to receive a copy of your magazine from one of our guests and must congratulate you for the high standard of articles, the colour reproduction and the 'off the beaten track' recreational news.

Please pass our appreciation on to Mark Yule for his excellent account of the Stinson.

V J O'Reilly
Manager
O'Reilly's Guest House
Green Mountains via Canungra, Qld

Keep 'em in the Dark

The time has come for some sort of restraint on what gets published in guidebooks to wilderness areas in Australia. The fact that guidebooks sell in large quantities presumably means that their publication leads to increased usage of the routes described. This may be desirable or at least acceptable in some areas but in other areas may lead to over-use and to a general degradation of wilderness values. The mere fact that a route guide exists can seriously compromise the wilderness character of a remote area—after all, mystery is one of the main ingredients of the wilderness experience...

Martin Hawes
West Hobart, Tas

Readers' letters are welcome. A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.



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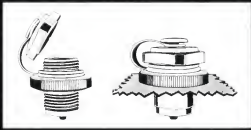
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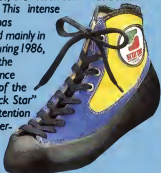
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35 cents a word (minimum \$3.50) for the
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Send notice and payment to Wild Publications
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The Victorian Climbing Club meets at
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Wild Shot



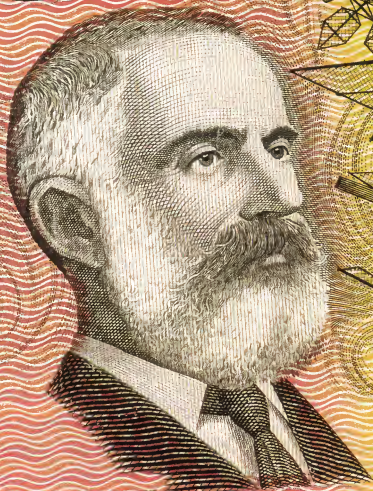
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TECHNOLOGY

Dr Baker also provided knowledge of the lumbar region and its importance in the design of the Karrimor back system.



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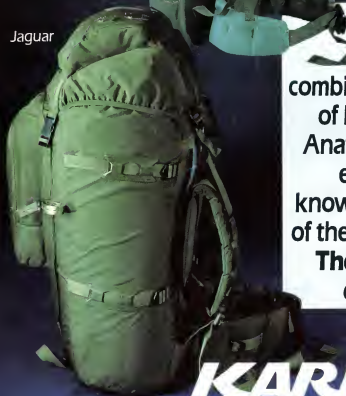
THE SYSTEM

The Karrimor S.A. (i) Back System is fitted to the Condor Jaguar S and Jaguar E models. The Self-Adjust System provides the correct fit for most back lengths and is the only back length system that is easily adjustable whilst on the wearer's back.

The Karrimor SA(m) Back System is fitted to the new Panther (left). This is a modified version of the S.A.(i)

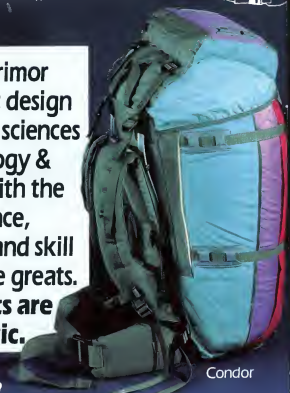


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